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## The Week

IT WOULD be easy to exaggerate the seriousness of the dissension within the ranks of the Republicans, yet there is no doubt that if the Democrats play their cards with skill and courage, they have much the strongest chance of victory they have had in twelve years. While Mr. Hoover was the best choice the Republicans could have made, the party being what it is, his nomination has left behind it such bitterness as has not been seen in the Republican ranks since 1912. The antagonism of the farmers, the passive dislike (at best) of some financial interests, the active dislike of many politicians of his own party, are grave liabilities. The platform, while no worse than usual, is a mass of evasions and hypocrisies which certainly will not attract independent-minded unattached voters, and particularly if the Democrats have the sense to strike out boldly on some of the same issues. It now seems assured that Governor Smith will be chosen at Houston; and if he is, Mr. Hoover's rather colorless personality, the personality primarily of an engineer and statistician, must compete with the most vivid and dynamic character in the political life of his day, a man who possesses to the highest degree the power to command the affection of large masses of the common people. We do not by any means suppose that the chances favor the Democrats; we maintain merely that, for the first time since 1916, that party has at least a chance of success. And whatever the outcome, the characters and issues involved will make the contest more significant and important than any other in this generation.

MR. HOOVER now knows, if he did not before, that politics makes strange bedfellows. The hero who saved the day for him was William S. Vare, the Pennsylvania machine politician who was refused admittance to the United States Senate because of the huge expenditures made on his behalf in the primary campaign. Hoover's dominating position as the convention opened was due to strong-arm work among the delegations from the Southern states which represent, not any substantial body of voters, but the federal patronage system. His pre-convention organization included a group of the smoothest professional workers in the country, some of whom had painfully close affiliations with the old Ohio Gang of Harding days. In 1920, Mr. Hoover kept away from the professional politicians, and the amateurs who advised him made a clean campaign which ended in a pathetically complete failure. Evidently one such lesson was enough.

THE plainest speaking about the Republican performance at Kansas City came, as might have been expected, from Senators La Follette and Norris. The former spoke at the convention, presenting a group of planks which were favored by the Wisconsin delegation—and were, of course, crushed by the steam roller. The latter waited until the show was over and then commented upon it in words dipped in bichloride of mercury. Both of them protested the treatment of the farmers, and urged the necessity of curbing the power trust. Both charged that the Republicans have never adequately disavowed the oil scandals. Senator Norris in particular declared that the platform and presidential


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candidate "will be a sad disappointment to every progressive citizen" and that "any Republican who believes in honest government" must look upon "the controlling features of the convention with shame and disgust." Shame and disgust—but not surprise. Senator Norris knows as well as anyone that the platform represented about the average level of the Republican party leaders and that the candidate is, on the whole, well above that level.

NO PLANK is worrying the Democratic leaders more than that on prohibition. Here follows a recommendation which we believe deserves consideration. "The policy on prohibition of those in power has been one of straddle and deceit. While praising the Constitution in general terms and declaring for enforcement of the law, they have failed to take the necessary measures to enforce it. The result has been a general disobedience of law which is seriously weakening the moral fiber of the body politic. This demoralization provides a far more grave problem than any raised by the use or disuse of alcohol as a beverage. We believe that the Volstead Act must be either enforced or repealed. As long as the people wish to keep it on the statute books, we shall call upon Congress for the appropriation of the hundreds of millions, the enlargement of the judiciary and the prosecuting staffs, and the authorization of the espionage and invasion of privacy, which a rigorous enforcement would demand. We ourselves feel strongly that this course does not comply with the democratic theory of government or the preservation of desirable individual liberties, but it is the only honest course as long as the Volstead law remains. It may be that even at such a price the law cannot be enforced. Or it may be that the people will think such a burden too heavy, and will refuse to authorize it. In either case we shall promptly move for repeal of the Volstead Act, and attempt to devise a workable federal policy. Thus we are determined to restore honesty and candor to public life and to the operation of government, at the place where it most intimately touches the private habits of millions of citizens." This plank probably would not please either the professional drys or the professional wets, but it is the only way out of a desperate national situation, and its honesty might engage the approval of millions of independent citizens.

EVER since the recent elections, France seems to have been on the brink of announcing a stabilization of the franc at or near four cents—about one-fifth of its pre-war value. Stabilization is essential, both for the future of business and for the soundness of the public treasury, but Poincaré seems to have been hesitating to take the decisive step. Influences that may have been retarding him are easy to understand. As long as the franc remains at its present value, a large part of the internal public debt, and especially of the debt incurred before and during the War, is repudiated. Germany, the defeated, repudiated hers entirely by letting the value of the mark sink to the infinitesimal, before establishing a new mark at the old level. France, the victorious, if she can do no better than hold the franc at four cents, repudiates her pre-war obligations by four-fifths. As long as the official stabilization is not undertaken, politicians can maintain the fiction that the franc will some day be restored to par. Even in the cases of those who know too much to hope for this, there is still a chance that the franc might be pushed higher than it is. But this would involve serious difficulties for the central bank in maintaining an adequate reserve, and would necessitate a heavier tax burden. Meanwhile, by delay, the situation tends to get out of hand, because a rise in internal prices continues to depreciate the franc at home, and the bank must suffer heavy expenditure in supporting its exchange value. It seems to be now or never for keeping value in any part of the old franc; there is still a slight chance that it may be never.

THERE are two great problems of the immediate future in China. Will the Nationalists, after their great success in taking Peking, be able to avoid internal dissensions and an attempt at military dictatorship? Will they be able to avoid a clash with Japan over Manchuria? On the first point, the chief present danger is from Feng Yu-hsiang. He is not a convinced Nationalist, being a military chieftain of the familiar sort, and he undoubtedly expects to be well paid for the alliance with Chiang Kai-shek which made possible the capture of Peking. Whether Hankow can give him what he will regard as adequate remuneration, and what he will do if it cannot, remain to be seen. As to the Manchurian question, there now seems little doubt that Chang Tso-lin has died of the wounds received when his special train was bombed. Whether the incident was the work of the Chinese or the Japanese (each side accuses the other) the immediate tension is relieved by it, for no other Northern leader is an equal menace to the Nationalist cause, and there is therefore less likelihood of an attempt at military action north of the Great Wall.

ANY effort to carry the civil struggle into Manchuria would probably mean another war between China and Japan. For the last year, Tokio has been increasingly frank in saying that she regards continued control of Manchuria as vital to herself, both for economic and for military reasons; and she does not propose to see her present hold menaced either by China or Russia. The Chinese Nationalists are well aware of this; and they are also well aware that any Sino-Japanese war at present would end in a victory for the latter. China's only real weapons are the boycott, and the appeal to world public opinion—including that of the

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Japanese Liberals, who are far from agreeing with the Tanaka government's present policy. Hankow will use the demand for the restoration of Manchuria as a good political battle-cry; but is unlikely to test its strength against Japan in the face of certain failure.

AS WAS predicted by all those conversant with finance, the banks have been forced to tighten up on brokers' loans, call rates have risen, and the inflated stock market has collapsed. This result has popularly been understood as a victory for the Federal Reserve authorities in a struggle with the bullish operators on the market. This is a most inaccurate and incomplete account of the forces at work. Credit had to be restricted for the sake of the safety of the banking system and the future of business. This necessity arose principally from the decline in reserves, as compared with the large volume of loans outstanding. Reserves had been falling on account of the export of large quantities of gold, and the sale of securities by the Reserve banks. For a long time these forces, coupled with a rise of rediscount rates, had little effect on the loaning policy of the member banks, because their own reserves were still ample, so that they did not need to depend on Reserve bank credit. Eventually the time arrived, however, when they had to resort to that credit, and the rediscount rate thus became an important factor. The high total of brokers' loans was often defended by the bulls because the aggregate value of the securities on the market had also risen appreciably. But that fact, even if of importance, had nothing to do with the relationship between reserves and loans, which must guide banking policy. The export of gold, in turn, can be accounted for, not by reference to the central banking authorities' attitude toward speculation, but to broader international policies. We had to export the gold because we had loaned more abroad than could be sent in the form of an export surplus of goods and services. Britain and France, in turn, needed the gold for their stabilization programs. Our capital is large, but if we insist on lending it abroad and using it for speculation here at the same time, we must some time reach a limit.

A FEW weeks ago it was announced that the entire record of the Sacco-Vanzetti case is to be published; and the first volume has now come from the press. As a piece of book-making it could hardly have been bettered; it is small and light, the type large and clear, so that in spite of its 1,000 pages, it can be held in one hand and read like a novel. There are to be six volumes in all, containing the full transcript of testimony and all the other documents in this famous case. They are published by Henry Holt and Company, 1 Park Avenue, New York, at $25 a set, a price which covers only part of the cost of publication, the remainder being contributed by a group of public-spirited citizens. As time passes, this famous case is certain to grow in significance; and with the complete, exact record available, students will not need to depend on accounts of what happened written by contemporaries who could not fail to be unconsciously affected by their bias for or against the men.

TWO years ago David Gordon, then seventeen years old, wrote a poem called "America" which was published in the Daily Worker, a Communist paper of New York City. Gordon, the editor and the business manager were all prosecuted on the ground that the poem was obscene, and were convicted under circumstances which strongly suggest that Communism and not obscenity was the real crime. The case was appealed and the editor and manager were freed, on the ground that it was not proved they even knew that the poem was to be published. Gordon was sent to prison on an indeterminate sentence which might be as long as three years. Largely through the efforts of the New York World, he was released on parole after about five weeks. Meanwhile, however, a federal indictment on the same grounds was hanging over all three individuals and might have resulted in another sentence of as much as five years for each defendant. We are glad to report that United States Attorney Tuttle has now ended this danger by dropping the prosecution. He recognized, it is fair to suppose, that the editor and manager would probably be set free again on the same grounds as before; that further prosecution was more likely to make a martyr of Gordon than otherwise; and that his previous trial and five weeks in jail were adequate punishment for a performance which, however bad its taste, was after all the effusion of a schoolboy. We applaud Mr. Tuttle's good sense no less than we commend his courage in thus defying the professional patriots who, if they had their way, would see every Communist given the limit every time he falls foul of any law.

THE fizzle of the attack on the probity of the New York State Department of Labor in administering the workmen's compensation law has national implications. If sustained, the charges might have injured the good repute of Governor Smith's administration. But more important than that, they seem to have constituted part of a campaign which interested parties are carrying on against the inauguration of a compulsory state insurance fund, which is favored by Governor Smith, by organized labor, and by impartial experts in compensation practice such as the American Association for Labor Legislation. The fight over the establishment of such funds is an issue in many states where workmen's compensation laws exist—and these now number most of the states in the nation. Of course the private insurance companies which write casualty policies are opposed to it. For this reason Professor Lindsay Rogers of

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Columbia, who as a Moreland Commissioner investigated the charges, did a public service not only in probing them to the bottom and finding them baseless, but in calling attention to the fact that they were brought chiefly by Mr. Henry D. Thayer, a former Industrial Commissioner who is now associated with the private insurance companies.

AN editorial paragraph in the New Republic of May 30 stated that the Southern Baptist Church has two million members. We based this statement on the estimate quoted in the "World Almanac" for 1928, which gives 2,009,471 for the Southern Baptist Convention, and 1,052,105 for the Northern Baptist Convention. We are advised from official church sources that the Southern Baptists have over 3,700,000 and the Northern Baptists nearly 1,400,000. We gladly correct the error.

# Herbert Hoover and the Republican Party

IN NOMINATING Herbert Hoover for the presidency, the Republicans have entrusted the responsibility of leadership to the member of their party who is best prepared for the work. He is not the most popular candidate whom they could have named. He will not, if elected, arrange for the party and the country an administration as neutral and as non-contentious as that of Mr. Coolidge. As nominee and as President, Mr. Hoover's career is likely to be controversial, agitated and not scrupulously considerate of partisan Republican susceptibilities. Yet from the point of view of the welfare of the Republican party in its relation to the welfare of the country, Mr. Hoover is more likely than any other Republican who could have been named both to fertilize the one promising motive in the party's life and to minimize its sterile tendency toward mere inertia which Mr. Coolidge has so conscientiously rationalized. He represents the only vital ingredient in Republicanism which may serve as a positive leaven in the future conduct and policy of the party.

Mr. Hoover believes in the subordination of government to business, and is in this essential respect an orthodox Republican. He envisages the United States as a society of free individuals who enjoy essential equality of economic opportunity and who, in severally pursuing their own welfare, are contributing effectively to the collective welfare. Americans of all classes, from his point of view, are worthily occupied in seeking their personal interests, and for the most part and wherever possible, they ought to be let alone. It is only through the successful carrying on of these private economic activities that American society can yield the largest possible sum of general fulfillment. The individuals who carry them on successfully are the chief benefactors of society, and if the government seeks, in addition to keeping order, to promote social welfare, it must undertake the job in coöperation with successful business men or in subordination to them. The function of government in relation to business is to safeguard its essential interests, to respect its essential purposes and even to encourage its essential activities. In his belief in all these doctrines Mr. Hoover is a sound Republican and a belated adherent of the pioneer tradition. That is what he means when he announces and reaffirms his loyal adhesion to Coolidgism.

While, however, he believes in the subordination of government to business, he believes also in the subordination of both government and business to another sovereign whose authority was not recognized in the day of the pioneer. The new sovereign is not as yet crowned with any title and his kingdom is not exercised by means of laws and orders, but it is a kingdom of this world and neither business nor government can escape its authority. Let us call it for the moment scientific method in its application to the pursuit of human ends. The introduction of this new secular god into the American pantheon is bound to exercise a disconcerting effect on the kind of allegiance which is granted to the two older gods of American practice. The people who believed in business as the salutary activity to which government should be subordinated, and those who believed in government as the salutary activity to which business should be subordinated have accepted the purposes of business or government at their advertised value and transferred this value from the object of the activity to its result. Pioneer Americanism assumed incautiously that if the individuals who make up a free society were encouraged to pursue their personal economic welfare, they would combine to achieve happiness for the whole group. The social democrat has assumed with a similar lack of caution the necessity of interference with this individual scramble for power and wealth, the hopelessness of achieving social welfare except by virtue of social motives and the technical competence of government to serve these public objects. But a citizen who bestows his allegiance on scientific method is concerned primarily about the fruits of an activity and only secondarily about its object. His attention is fastened on the processes which are supposed to lead to an admirable consummation rather than on the announced and sanctified goal itself. The priests of the new religion of scientific method are occupied with question marks about the outcome of activities rather than with conclusions about their values.

Herbert Hoover's emphasis on method implies, consequently, the introduction of a distracting element into the Coolidge-Republican Utopia. It is very well to believe in business and to subordinate government to it, but those who put their trust in scientific method are obliged to question whether rule-of-thumb business is capable of achieving its alleged objects. During his career as Secretary of

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Commerce Mr. Hoover has labored to improve the older methods of conducting business. He has tried to identify the function of government in relation thereto with the introduction of more efficient methods into economic processes. He has hoped in this way to strengthen the operation of the Republican economy without raising any question about the existing distribution of economic power and without invoking political agitation. The great majority of the influential business men of the country approved of his program, and with their help he has sold it to the Republican party. After having nominated him as its candidate for President, the party has for the moment taken it over. He has indicated the only constructive direction in which the Republican party can move, and he is to be congratulated upon seizing it, upon recruiting a certain amount of support for it among business men and in getting himself nominated as its representative in politics.

But it is a poor omen of a prosperous candidacy or presidency for Mr. Hoover that the Republican party, after having nominated him on his merits as a man and as a leader, shows very little enthusiasm for its own handiwork. Its suppressed uneasiness and irritation justify the prediction of a perilous career for Mr. Hoover as candidate, and, if elected, either a stormy or a compromising career as President. The Republican politicians are far from being converted to the subordination of politics to engineering method. They have accepted Mr. Hoover as the representative of the most energetic and capable element in American practical affairs, but they will not allow him to ride them very hard without balking; and if subsequently he gets involved in conflict with them, his own shortcomings as a popular leader will handicap him severely. Doubtless his leadership will pass unchallenged during the campaign (which will be conducted on the basis of substituting organization for popular emotional appeal), but should he be elected, he will, in order to lead the Republican politicians anywhere, have to quarrel with a great many of them. He will have to work with a party which is united only in defending vested interests and privileges. Any attempt to formulate and carry out a positive policy of any kind will breed acute dissensions among Republicans of different classes, sections and opinions.

Even more serious for Mr. Hoover, however, would be an effort on his part to translate into political terms his program of business efficiency. As Secretary of Commerce he has helped business men to conduct their existing affairs more methodically and successfully—that is, to increase output, to lower production costs and to coöperate more effectively in manufacturing and marketing their products. But he has assumed little or no responsibility for any improvement in business method which was not quickly and demonstrably profitable to individual business men. They have worked with him on that assumption, and as the clerk of President Coolidge, he did not need to ask for anything different or more inclusive. He could shift to the back of his chief the responsibility for initiating or not initiating economic policies which were not and could not be justified by an immediately increased profit. But as President he would have to assume responsibility for increasing the efficiency of business in respects which do not interest business men as individual producers and which may involve expenditures and sacrifices on their part. He will have to tackle the problems of applying his engineering methods to the more flimsy parts of the economic structure—to the agrarian depression, to unemployment, to the concentration of electric power in a few hands without effective public control, to the disorganized coal industry and to the unsatisfactory relationship between organized industry and organized labor. If his attitude toward these questions is as evasive and complacent as that of President Coolidge, the progressive opinion of the country will size up his proposed application of scientific method to economic processes as merely a hypocritical attempt to rationalize Mellonism, and will cease to cherish any hopes or illusions about him. On the other hand, if he really tries to introduce into economic processes improvements which are more interesting to wage-earners, farmers and consumers than they are to financiers and business executives, he will soon find himself engaged in a fierce quarrel with his own party.

The dilemma is real, and when Mr. Hoover seeks to extricate himself from it he will do so at a heavy cost of some kind. His easiest way out would undoubtedly be to follow faithfully in Mr. Coolidge's footsteps and to immerse the grave national problems of economic adjustment in a cloud of weasel words. But Mr. Hoover is not like that. He brings an active and a realistic intelligence to the examination of concrete problems, and his personal instincts demand of him decisions rather than pretentious and evasive discourse. His mind is occupied with the study of processes and the effort to improve them rather than with the elaboration of principles and the justification of conclusions. He honestly wishes to combine progressivism with conservatism, and he could not as President sell his conscience by accepting payment in Coolidge currency without cheapening himself in his own eyes. During the campaign he will have to squirm, for, while he can decide nothing until he is President, he will be obliged as a candidate to discourse about everything, and he cannot in what he says take many liberties with Coolidge doctrine. The concentration of the La Follette, the agrarian and labor union vote on Smith may, consequently, defeat him. If he should pull through the severe test of the election, he will have a breathing spell. During the first few months a President is always right. When his new troubles come, he will, moreover, be better armed with the powers and opportunities of his office to deal with them. But come they

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soon will, chiefly from the insubordinate and irreconcilable elements in his own party, and he will need magnanimity as well as adroitness and determination to deal with them. He will put up a valiant but probably in the end an unsuccessful fight. The inertia of the Republican politicians and the unintelligence of American business men in relation to public affairs will wear him out. He will be unable to recruit the following with which successfully to oppose them, and he will in the end either conform or quit. But he would, we hope, have started something which as a fermenting influence in American politics will survive, even if it has to be abandoned by the man who started it.

## Public Utilities and Public Opinion

THE Federal Trade Commission's investigation of propaganda by the public utility corporations continues to reveal huge expenditures in various parts of the country. The activities in New York are typical of all, and are worth enumerating briefly. In that state, sums ranging from $28,000,000 to $38,000,000 are spent annually for newspaper advertising; and while part of this expenditure is a legitimate appeal for increased use of gas or electricity, the pouring out of such vast amounts cannot fail to have a pronounced moral effect in influencing the editorial attitude of the press on such questions as government ownership. Two textbooks glorifying private ownership were written by the public utility men, and 106,000 copies of them introduced into 491 New York high schools. Nearly 200,000 copies of a pamphlet attacking the progressive water power policy of Governor Smith were circulated to newspapers, libraries, civic organizations and public officials. Speakers who were hired to represent the utilities appeared before audiences aggregating a third of a million persons, chiefly for the purpose of criticizing the Smith plans. The textbooks already in use in the schools were examined, and the most strenuous efforts made to have them thrown out if they showed any friendliness toward public ownership.

The conditions as to public utility propaganda which were described by Mr. Lawrence Todd in the New Republic of May 16, are now known to exist practically all over the country. The National Electric Light Association has coöperated with the propaganda committees of the various state public utility associations in an amazing campaign to influence public opinion in favor of private ownership. At least a million dollars a year has been expended, and probably much more. College professors who prove to be "unsympathetic" are hounded with a remorselessness worthy of the Spanish Inquisition; those who are willing to see the light are rewarded. The latter are helped to get their textbooks published; they receive bribes in the form of "retainer fees," ranging as high in some cases as $5,000, though most of the professors come cheap, at $200, or $300 a year. They are also paid to make speeches, and the fact of such payment is kept a secret. All this is but a small part of the story of what the utilities have done. Their attempts to influence state and national legislation constitute another chapter of which hardly anything is yet known, and it is safe to say, an equally serious one.

The social implications of this development have an importance which it would be hard to overstress. As has often been pointed out, and notably by H. S. Raushenbush and Harry W. Laidler in their book, "Power Control," recently published by the New Republic, this country is face to face with a major decision in regard to the ownership and management of the chief of these public utilities, electric power. It is a choice comparable in importance with that which was made (or rather, was allowed to go by default) in regard to the great new transcontinental railroad systems shortly after the Civil War. The decisions of the next decade or two, particularly as to the creation of a "giant power" system, may prove to be irreparable thereafter. Yet in this juncture, it is fair to say that the public is hearing only one side of the case. While the utilities pour out their millions to damn public ownership, practically nothing is spent to answer their arguments, expose their falsehoods and paint a picture of the possible alternatives.

The radical press, commenting on the revelations before the Federal Trade Commissions, assumes without argument that none of the activities which have been revealed ought to be permitted. Yet it is clear that the public utility men should have the same right as other citizens to hold whatever views they please, and to express them. If they believe that private ownership is a wise social policy, they are entitled to be heard in support of that opinion. The difficulty comes when they attempt, not to participate in a fair debate, but to smother all arguments in opposition to their own. This is in fact what they have done. By using the sheer weight of wealth, they have tried and in a measure have succeeded in preventing their opponents from ever getting a fair hearing at all. They have not hesitated to lie about such successful experiments in government operation as the Ontario, Canada, electric system. They have fought with great skill, and heretofore with success, against Muscle Shoals and Boulder Dam. They have used their funds illegitimately to obtain the defeat of their known opponents in the legislatures when they were candidates for reëlection. Their propaganda has been like that of the Allies in the United States during the Great War, and indeed, like all propaganda: it has attempted to conceal and distort the truth in order to make sure that a given point of view shall prevail.

How can these activities be curbed and brought

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under a reasonable degree of social control? The cynical will say that they cannot; that the United States is dedicated to the supremacy of large-scale capitalism and that the public utilities, representing one of its most efficient developments, will inevitably continue on their present course. Yet there are some checks which are fairly obvious, which can be made a matter of law, with a good chance of successful operation. In the session of Congress which has just adjourned, a bill was introduced requiring that all lobbyists who seek to influence the course of federal legislation should be registered and forced to disclose the interests which they represent. A similar law is in successful operation in New York state, and works no hardship on anyone which is not more than outweighed by its advantages. One of the very worst of the power trust's activities, its seeking to poison the mind of the rising generation by activities in the schools, could be checkmated by requiring that when textbooks are presented to schoolchildren by private interests, the name of the donor should be printed in each copy. The association of newspaper correspondents in the Senate gallery at Washington has a rule that any member who accepts remuneration for publicity work of any kind shall immediately register that fact with the association in a public manner; and when the Federal Trade Commission revealed that one of the correspondents had been getting an unannounced salary of $150 a week from the public utility lobby, he was promptly expelled from membership. There is no reason, so far as we are aware, why a college should not make the same requirement in regard to members of its faculty, who occupy in relation to their students a position of peculiar trust.

The vast sums of money which are now spent as propaganda are included by the public utility corporations among their "legitimate expenses"; and public service commissions fix rates large enough to permit a surplus to be earned for this purpose. There is an obvious injustice in making the people pay thus for their own deception. The legitimate expenses of any public utility ought to include the actual cost of operation plus reasonable sums for depreciation account and for profit. If the operators of these utilities want to go on a crusade against public ownership, they should pay its expenses out of their private and individual pockets.

If these changes were made, there would still, of course, be plenty of opportunity for illegitimate activity on the part of the corporations. It is, for instance, almost impossible for public officials to draw the line between legitimate newspaper advertising for business reasons and illegitimate expenditure for the purpose of binding the editor (who may or may not be conscious of the process) to your chariot wheel. Accounts can always be juggled, and improper items concealed. Yet the fact that wicked men break the law is not an argument for having none. The greater the difficulties thrown in the path of the propagandist, the less effective his work. The situation here involved is one of which the country as a whole has hardly yet become conscious. The revelations which have lately come out of Washington may help start some of the constructive thinking which is so urgently needed.

## The Pasteboard Platform

THE Republican platform, like most national platforms of recent years, is a symbol rather than a reality, an incantation rather than a declaration of policy. We have almost forgotten what, according to political theory, a platform is supposed to be. Here is a "party," presumably composed of people who want to use the national government for certain public ends. In order to attract others to their banner, elect their candidates, and thus have their way in national affairs, they declare what they propose to do if entrusted with power. It is part of their mission to convert a majority to a belief in their aims. Their aims, presumably, have something to do with important issues confronting the nation. And their candidates are supposed to "stand" upon the platform, and urge its proposals upon the consideration of the voters.

Quite a different conception of the platform rests today, however, in the minds of those who have to frame it. It was already certain at Kansas City, when the platform was adopted, who the candidate was to be. Those who had the most to say about writing it probably had a shrewd suspicion of his identity when they decided upon its clauses. This candidate (like most of the others) had made exactly no concrete proposals to the people as to what he expected to do if nominated or elected. Senator Borah had with difficulty extracted a dry utterance from him; otherwise he had promised merely to carry on the Coolidge policies. This near-silence was carefully calculated for its political effectiveness. Any concrete proposals might have alienated some faction; the nomination was to be won, if at all, by a general obeisance to the powers that be, accompanied by an oiled and silent manipulation of political machinery carried on by shrewd politicians like Slemp and Brown. And now the same tactics are transferred to the election campaign, for the same reasons. The problem of the platform-makers was to propose as little as possible, and to dwell on the past; to polish up the Republican idol, but not to evoke prophecy from its lips. "The record of the present administration is a guarantee of what may be expected in the next. Our words have been made deeds. We offer no promises, but accomplishments."

This strategy implies that the party is composed, not of people who have a program and intend to carry it out, but of people who want to be elected, and don't dare risk having a program for fear it

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will interfere with their election. It implies that they want to convert voters, not to specific policies, but to an unreasoning adherence to the institution which they embody. And it implies that, in the judgment of shrewd politicians, success at the polls in our times is to be achieved, not by a heightened stimulation of intelligence—which may lead to differences—but by a reduction of the voters to the low common denominator of emotional adherence to party. At least, this is the policy of success for a party which has long controlled a numerical majority, split in everyday practice by wide differences of interest and outlook.

Thus the introduction claiming for the party a responsibility for all the glories of this, the greatest nation on earth. Thus the appeal to unreasoning panic in such words as, "It is well to remember that the confidence and prosperity which we enjoy can be shattered, if not destroyed, if this belief in the honesty and sincerity of our government is in any way affected. A continuation of this great public peace of mind now existing, which makes for our material well-being, is only possible by holding fast to the plans and principles which have marked Republican control."

What is easier than to praise economy and promise a continuation of it, to call attention to the reduction of the public debt and to tax revision, to attribute all our prosperity to the tariff and warn against any lowering of it? All this, and most of the rest, is merely defense of what has gone before and is well known. Only in regions of policy where intense dissatisfaction has become manifest is anything new proposed. Agriculture, of course, is the most prominent of these. Here the problem was, with one hand to make it appear that the administration had done something positive to alleviate distress, and with the other to promise something as a substitute for the rejected proposal which the most active farm organizations themselves had put forward. A vague program for reorganization of the marketing system and further tariff protection was all that could be improvised here. In other active problems, the massive minds who claim the entire credit for the greatness of the United States fumble with even greater uncertainty. The disorganization of soft coal mining had to be recognized. But what to do about it? "The party is anxious, hopeful and willing"—surely a perfect anti-climax —"to assist in any feasible plan for the stabilization of the coal mining industry which will work with justice to the miners, consumers and producers." A sop had to be thrown to labor, aside from claiming the credit for "high wages." "We believe that injunctions in labor disputes have in some instances been abused and have given rise to a serious question for legislation." What legislation? We are not told. In the case of railroads, there have occurred "changes in the public demands, trade conditions and of the character of the competition." What changes? It is not said. But, "in the light of this new experience possible modifications or amendments, the need of which is proved, should be considered." What amendments? Silence. And even if the need is proved, nothing more than consideration is promised. In regard to public utilities, "while recognizing that at times federal regulation might be more effective than state in controlling intrastate [interstate?] utilities, the party favors and has sustained state regulation." Another forecast of inaction. What about Boulder Dam and Muscle Shoals? Nothing. What about the relief and remedy of unemployment? Nothing.

In three planks the strong hand of Senator Borah seems to have made some dent. The party praises obedience to the Constitution, and promises observance and enforcement of the Eighteenth Amendment; the Volstead Act is not mentioned. The party stands for honesty in government, deplores the fact that officials have been dishonest, and promises to prosecute misbehaving officials. Thus a tardy and reluctant reference to the Harding administration scandals is wrung. The party promises not to use money improperly in the campaign, to publish contributions, and not to end the campaign with a deficit. It will not, in other words, do what it did in 1920, and what it has overlooked in Smith of Illinois and Vare of Pennsylvania. One of these planks is as nearly meaningless as it can be; the other two are halting confessions of sin, without conviction of it.

If there is to be any real Republican platform, we must rely upon Mr. Hoover to give it to us. He cannot pass himself off as a second Coolidge. For him to say nothing more than this about the problems before the nation would be to belie the great reputation which he has achieved among his admirers as an engineer and economist rather than a mere politician, as a man out of the ordinary with a mind of his own rather than a common political self-seeker. The intelligent public will be right in regarding the platform as a ceremony which means little, and which must be passed over to look at the candidate. It is now up to the candidate to show that he means anything more.

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# How Is Hoover?

THE nomination by the Republican party of Herbert Hoover for President, like the nomination of Theodore Roosevelt in 1904, is a signal of the influence of novel factors in American politics. Mr. Hoover is an engineer who is also a business man. The methods which he represents as a business man are determined by training and experience as an engineer; and the purposes which inform his activities as an engineer are determined by his outlook as a business man. As a combination of engineer and business man he is a startling apparition in American politics. Although several men with engineering training have received the nomination for President by one party or the other, they were picked, not because they were engineers, but because they were generals. Never before in the history of the United States has any man been nominated for the presidency who was an engineer but not a general, or who was a business man. Yet his success is not an accident. If he had not the qualities which are natural to an engineer-business man, it is doubtful whether he would ever have triumphed over his more political competitors. That is why his nomination advertises the intrusion of new motives and actors into the stale American political drama.

In the past, a preoccupation with business or the training and experience of an engineer would, except in very rare instances, practically disqualify a man for high and particularly for the highest political position. American business or engineering has aimed at a mastery of processes or affairs with human beings as incidental to them, while politics has consisted in maneuvering and cajoling human beings, but taking processes for granted. American political leaders have usually been sanguine, self-assertive, unsystematic, persuasive, loquacious and sympathetic men who specialized in personal relationships and who were experts in circulating the verbal and emotional currency of political intercourse. They might or might not have a talent for reaching decisions and the management of affairs, but their political activity concerned itself with words rather than with physical processes, and with life in its dramatic and human rather than its technical aspects. A business man like Mark Hanna, who became during the last generation a considerable power in American politics, happened to possess a negotiable political personality whose virtues he enhanced late in life, but very few business men are capable of this kind of flexibility. Those American political leaders who have qualified for the presidency have usually been lawyers with a long and varied experience of political traffic, who specialized in expressing themselves in customary political terms to their fellow countrymen and in looking and playing the part of statesman. During the period of progressive agitation they were transformed into exhorters and preachers like Bryan, Roosevelt, La Follette and Wilson, but they depended for success no less on words, and they were still essentially actors in a conversational political drama. They had created in their own minds an image of what the American people were and wanted. Their political lives consisted in cutting verbal and other capers in celebration of this image.

Mr. Hoover is devoid of these conventional political qualities and habits of mind. He is not loquacious in public; he is not affable; he is not sympathetic; he is not adaptable; he is not playing the part of a popular moral leader or conventional statesman. He has never been elected to any office in the gift of the American people; and he has never, in order to get elected, bowed and scraped and smiled and flattered his fellow countrymen. The old-style politicians are instinctively opposed to him. He does not conduct himself in the accommodating way which they like. He is a poor public speaker and a pedestrian and undistinguished writer. While he likes to talk and talks well and with a complete grasp of his subject, his conversation is adapted to only small audiences. He arouses lively enthusiasm and personal loyalty among individual intimates and particular groups, but he cannot communicate anything vital from himself to a crowd. It would be difficult to imagine a less political and popularly ingratiating personality than that of this round, sedentary, factually-minded man who seems incapable of pretending to be anything that he does not know himself to be. Politics is not a stage for him, and he is incapable of playing a part even in the service of his imagination. To his mind it is a workshop in which there are certain results to be achieved by those who are capable of understanding and utilizing the actual and usually the measurable conditions of achievement. He is a statesman in his own way, but he is a statesman who is preoccupied with understanding and governing economic and technical processes rather than all kinds of foolish, irrelevant, suggestible and insubordinate people.

His nomination calls, consequently, for a good deal of explanation. It is a triumph not of agitation and campaigning, but of political engineering. He has not captured for himself a place in the imagination of the American people. His personality did not contribute to his success except in its proper and powerful effect on his intimates. His program and outlook must have been negligible, for he refused to reveal them. He was opposed by a powerful conspiracy of state Republican bosses, by the great majority of Republican politicians who

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foresaw the unwelcome prospect in him of another independent and masterful President, and by large financial and business interests which do not consider him, from their point of view, sufficiently amenable. Finally, the whole agricultural interest in its political manifestation regarded him with suspicion and dislike. How, then, was his nomination brought about? What were the positive influences in his favor which were sufficient to overcome such a formidable array of enemies and obstacles?

Numerous and formidable as his opponents were, they were poorly equipped to play their common game effectively. There was no alternative candidate upon whom the unplacated politicians, the suspicious big business men and the aggrieved agrarians could agree. This was partly the fault of Mr. Coolidge. The President's whole performance since he announced last August his choice not to run is psychologically puzzling and is open to several interpretations. Its effect in the beginning was to harm Mr. Hoover, but, as time went on and he repeated the expression of his choice, it began to work in Hoover's favor. For while he continued to produce some uncertainty among Mr. Hoover's friends, he produced more among his enemies. He helped to prevent them from uniting on anyone else by keeping the possibility open that he might consent to be drafted. But Mr. Coolidge's influence was not in this respect decisive. He could have prevented Mr. Hoover's nomination, but wouldn't. Hoover's enemies would have prevented it, but couldn't. Mr. Hoover in some way nominated himself. As soon as Mr. Hughes counted himself out, his enemies were unable to produce a candidate with any real momentum to his pretensions. If Mr. Coolidge had intended by his behavior to expose the bankruptcy of old-style Republican political leadership, he could not have adopted a course which was better calculated to accomplish his object. The only candidates which Mr. Hoover's many enemies could produce to contest his nomination were sectional leaders and petty state bosses who happened to be Senators. Not one of them measured up to the job. Not one of them could produce the necessary qualifications for national leadership. The Republican party has for a long time been too disorganized to develop a genuinely national leader. Harding was, of course, a pitiable failure, and Coolidge has been a garrulous apology for the absence of leadership whom the Republican party would have liked to renominate in order to disguise its poverty in dynamic ideas and personalities.

Mr. Hoover's qualities enabled him to take advantage of the sterility of the older American politics. His positive strength derived in part from the enthusiasm which he inspires in a few people of ability and energy, but chiefly from the confidence which the large body of small business men throughout the country have come to feel in him. The trade papers were all enthusiastically for him, and so were the chambers of commerce. The effectiveness of their support proved the existence of a new power in American politics. They recognized in him the practical, non-political point of view of a business man, combined with the methods of a technician and with the experience of managing large human as well as large business enterprises. Eight years ago it was his work as relief and food administrator which recruited supporters for him as a presidential candidate. Today it is chiefly his work as Secretary of Commerce which accounts for his success. He has placed himself as a candidate at the head of the most aggressive and influential class in the United States, and if elected as President, he will increase their political consciousness and reveal by his successes and failures how far a business man and engineer who may also be a statesman can dispose with the old art of politics.

Thus Mr. Hoover's nomination is really symptomatic of the triumph of business over traditional American politics. The predatory business which the progressives fought based its political calculations upon an alliance with the Old Guard, but the more successful business which Mr. Hoover represents repudiates the alliance. It is prompted by motives and determined by methods which the Old Guard —the Curtises, the Watsons, the Hilleses, the Willises—do not share and cannot understand. They cannot conceive of politics or government as a workshop. It means for them a comedy of intrigue and pretence, of which the solemn clown is the hero and the successful barker the appropriate intermediary with the public. Mr. Hoover, on the other hand, has introduced into politics engineering method, and he has achieved thereby at least one brilliant and well earned success. In nominating himself he has not tried to play the popular favorite. He has merely maneuvered shrewdly to take advantage of the poverty of his enemies and of an increasing craving on the part of American business for a more trustworthy vehicle of political expression.

But if Mr. Hoover, in nominating himself, has dispensed with the cheaper manifestations of American political art, he has also, in his capacity as engineer, business man and statesman, neglected a good deal that was good in the older tradition. Politics, even though it has much to gain from a technical mastery of physical processes, must remain to a very considerable extent the art of integrating or conciliating essential economic interests, and of conciliating perverse, foolish, aggrieved and socially under-nourished human beings. The Republican administration and convention have combined their consent to Mr. Hoover's nomination with a rough repudiation of the demands of the organized political agrarianism of the country. No doubt there was abundant justification for refusing to the commodity farmers the privileges which they demanded, but it leaves them, neverthe-

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less, with a righteous grievance. They can allege with justice that industry fattens upon a rich diet of privileges while agriculture grows lean upon the husks of immaculate economic theory. The engineer's and business man's government which Mr. Hoover embodies will have to overcome a lively sense of injustice on the part of one of the largest economic classes in the community, which may obtain one of several dangerous political expressions. Moreover, this farmer's sense of wrong will fit in neatly with the revenge which the older politics will try to take on Mr. Hoover for its defeat at his hands. This older politics consisted fundamentally of the somewhat base arts which the political agents of the successful classes had to use in order to neutralize the sense of inferiority and social unimportance from which the great majority of the unsuccessful suffered. It exploited the overflowing hearts of the millions whose pockets and whose heads were relatively empty. Mr. Hoover can be nominated as a competent and incorruptible engineer-business man who knows how to do things and who disdains the sentimentalism of the old politics, but can he be elected in this incarnation? His opponent will be the most seductive political personality in the United States of today, who by inheritance and experience is peculiarly skillful in pulling the heart-strings of the easily moved populous class of the under-dog.

In another respect, also, Mr. Hoover has hitherto ignored something which was good but degenerate in the older politics. He has ignored any appeal to moving ideas. From the point of view of the older politics, ideas and convictions dwindled usually into empty shams and shibboleths, but these intellectual pretences were at bottom the shoddy tribute which the strivers for political power were obliged to pay to an alleged public opinion. Mr. Hoover's campaign did not attribute any importance to the influence which activity of intelligence may exert on political behavior. One of its major assumptions was that public opinion was apathetic and that it was the kind of sleeping dog which should be left to lie. He merely took Coolidgism for granted and paraded it now and then as a perfect creed for government by the engineer-business man. As a matter of fact, this addiction to Coolidgism was a necessary but none the less a sorry pretence. He will be obliged to stick to it during the campaign, but it is not a genuine expression of his personal philosophy, and it is not a sufficient creed for the kind of government which he would like to furnish to the American people. Mr. Hoover is a theoretical individualist, a conservative and a believer in government subordinated to business, but he is not a stand-patter. His own personality is restless, alert, progressive and dynamic, and he is interested primarily in giving reality, if not to bigger and better ideas, at least to different and better methods of doing the business of the world. As President he will not be like Mr. Coolidge, a sedative; he will be a ferment. His chance of election would be increased if he could capitalize politically the leaven that is in him. But during the campaign he will remain handcuffed to Coolidgism, from which he cannot emancipate himself until and unless he is elected.

HERBERT CROLY.

# New Hope for British Industry

A SERIES of conferences has lately been in progress between the General Council of the British Trade Union Congress and a group of about thirty important employers, headed by Sir Alfred Mond. These conferences are worth much more than the superficial notices so far given them in the daily press. "Industrial Peace Talks" is the headline commonly used. The average man says he has seen four-and-twenty leaders of industrial peace, and they have all come to a bad end, so he turns over to the account of the latest casualty at the Zoo.

Yet even the average man would be interested if he could be told clearly and simply that "Industrial Peace" does not figure at all in the agenda of these entirely unsensational talks, but that the future of Britain, as a leading industrial power, is the only issue. The real significance of this new experiment in industrial diplomacy is that a group of employers, representing gigantic interests, have realized the futility of appealing either to the small fry of their own class or to the politicians, and have gone boldly to the big labor cartel, saying, "Let us do this job together." That sounds somewhat revolutionary to come from capitalists, but it is essentially what is implied. Whether or not concrete benefits will result to British industry, to say nothing of the dawn of a new and greater prosperity than has yet been known, which some predict, depends on many other factors. No one supposes that conferences among fifty or sixty people, however important, can of themselves change the fortunes of a nation.

But, in any case, this vital step has been taken in the forward march of economic enlightenment—that capitalism has come along and said, "We want to work with the labor unions in planning out the new organization, and the technical and financial developments of industry." Whether genuinely meant or not, in the sense in which Labor means it, this open profession of faith is enormously valuable to those who know something of working-class history.

The leading figure among the employers, and the man to whom the invitation to these conferences was due, is Sir Alfred Mond, one of the most remarkable of the modern captains of industry. When he talks politics he is merely an echo of the Tory Handbook for Good Little Boys, but when he talks industry, he is bold and imaginative—and technically very sound, wherein he differs from so

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many of the previous heralds of a new age. That he has his personal aims and ambitions is doubtless true enough, though the premiership is apparently not one of them, or he would not now be giving up his seat to go to the House of Lords. His ambition, perhaps, is to be a William Clissold in the flesh, a Wellsian combination of scientist, business man, and prophet, who will point the way to the modern kind of Utopia that is expressed in terms of bathrooms, electric cookers, old masters, automobiles, and symphony concerts (they mix quite well nowadays, despite Mr. Mencken and Mr. Sinclair Lewis).

Mond has been able to build up his huge chemical trust, his anthracite trust, and his big Anglo-American finance corporation, because he has the scientific mind. He is not the scientist turned business man, but the business man with a scientific training, a quite different thing. His mind works along lines of organization, technical expertness, and constant experimentation. He is not a superman, of course, but simply a product of the modern *rapprochement* between workshop and university. There are others in England, America, and Germany, but most of them do not get much of a chance.

One of Sir Alfred's difficulties, it may be surmised, has been the state of the coal industry. During the coal troubles of 1925-26, he gave the coal owners reams of good advice, but as he made it painfully evident that he thought they were a pack of incompetent bunglers, they mulishly, if naturally, turned their backs on him. Yet the future of the chemical industries is bound up with the efficient working of coal. Coal in turn is too intimately connected with the whole world of industry, as well as too bankrupt of ideas and of moral force inside itself, to be treated separately. A bold, progressive and comprehensive policy can succeed. Everyone stands aghast at the misery and suffering of the miners and at the threatened ruin of a great productive industry, but nothing is done. Almost everyone accepts the verdict, "Act of God," and thinks it sufficient explanation to point to the lamentable state of the American, German, and Belgian coal industries.

That is where Baldwin has failed. He is no malignant High Priest wishing to crucify the miners, but rather the Pilate who murmurs amiably, "What is economic truth?" and washes his hands of further responsibility. Labor answered Baldwin's question with a scheme that the Institute of Economics investigators think the best yet propounded ("The British Coal Dilemma," by I. Lubin and H. Everett). But it was one of those irritatingly perfect schemes drawn up by the detached student. It was technically sound and administratively practicable, but it was psychologically unworkable in the circumstances. From the labor point of view, of course, it was quite right to put it forward. The workers were not to blame because the public was not ready to accept it. Mond adopts much the same policy, as regards the technological development of the industry, but he is willing to do anything—trustify, amalgamate, absorb, or close down concerns, placate incompetent directors, make pacts with organized labor—anything to get the process going as soon as possible.

Now, some of the elements that make up the gravity of the coal situation also threaten cotton, wool, and steel. The trouble is general and the remedy must be general. The government is hopeless, for it is in the hands of the coal owners and their friends; the small manufacturers and commercial people are impossible, for they still think they are in the eighteen-nineties; the banks, by the perverse fate that makes financiers think they are Olympians, above criticism, are worse, for they jam crowbars into the machinery every time the wheels start to move.

A few years ago, Labor would, to Sir Alfred Mond, have seemed equally hopeless, for it appeared to be carrying on a furious flirtation with Soviet Russia that seemed no less dangerous because the intentions on the British side were strictly honorable. More recently, however, the unions have become disillusioned and have come to the conclusion that policies made in Russia or anywhere else will be unlikely to offer much assistance to Britain, conditions being notably different.

Contrary to the belief widely held, there has been no drift to the right in the British labor movement, in the true sense of the term. It has merely become more realistic in its outlook, more pragmatic in its policy. It has not abjured socialism, or decided to accept capitalism, but it has come to the conclusion that capitalism is not, at the moment, so weak that it can be obliterated in the space of a few months, or even a few years. Labor has therefore had this position to face: the world is on the eve of vast new developments in industrial organization and technology, which must inevitably have serious reactions on the workers themselves; shall labor organizations stand aside and allow these changes to be directed solely by the employers for their own benefit, or shall they get in "on the ground floor" and take a hand in shaping the new movements for the benefit of the workers?

The moment for the decision came when Mond, seeing the realistic mood of Labor, invited the Trade Union Congress, both as a necessary factor, and as the only important one that seemed to promise a constructive response, to come into conference with him and his group of employers who thought in the same way. It was a more fateful choice, perhaps, than many realized at the time. There was no theoretical working out of the problem; the Trade Union Congress' action was almost instinctive, and despite the fulminations of a handful of comic communists, the General Council said decisively, "We are in on this, but it is to be understood that we are not turning aside by a hair's breadth from our socialist objective. Nor," they

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said, "will we discuss anything unless we can discuss everything—the management, organization, and financing of industry, for example." Sir Alfred Mond agreed that all cards should be on the table. So, with little of the limelight of publicity, for this was business, sober, hard, and glamorless, the first full conference took place in January. To the impartial observer, there is something momentous in this meeting, the first of its kind that had ever taken place, between thirty-odd representatives of organized Labor, who, less than two years before, had been directing a general strike of Britain's transport, mining, steel and power industries, and thirty-odd capitalists standing for a capital of five billion dollars in coal, transport, steel, textiles, chemicals, rubber and oil.

One of the labor difficulties, at first, was that these employers did not represent their industries or their employers' associations, in the technical sense of the term. They were there as individuals. "Why?" said the trade-unionists.

The answer was amusing to those who have heard so much from labor platforms about the solidarity of Capital. There are two big organizations among British employers. The Federation of British Industries, which Labor has been accustomed to use as a bogey man with which to frighten the children, is a very representative organization, but it deals only with the commercial and technical aspects of industry. The Confederation of Employers' Organizations, which might with much more justice serve as Labor's bogey, deals only with "labor questions," and consists in the main of those employers' associations, in the various industries, which carry on wage negotiations, etc., with the unions. The Confederation is decidedly "hard-boiled" and has old-fashioned views on most industrial problems. It would never have thought of talking to the Trade Union Congress about industry in general, and anyhow it had not the authority to go outside "labor questions," just as the Federation could not venture outside its own restricted field. But the precise virtue of Sir Alfred Mond's idea was that at the same series of conferences everything affecting industry should be discussed, from raw materials and finance to collective bargaining and labor relations. One may read between the lines and conclude that he has scant respect for the Confederation and its antediluvian outlook, and was not sorry to leave it out in the cold. Nevertheless, his group contains its two leading spirits (who are, themselves, fairly progressive), as well as several ex-presidents of the Federation of British Industries. Its representative nature, in the wider sense of the term, is therefore not in doubt.

The General Council, at all events, evidently feels that Sir Alfred and his colleagues have the necessary economic power to translate into action on a sufficiently large scale whatever principles may be jointly agreed upon. That confidence is in all probability soundly based. The trade-unionists, all through, have shown first-rate judgment and have given evidence of that statesmanship which enables men to stand outside themselves and see the entire stream of events and tendencies as an organic whole.

Since the first conference, the affair has proceeded by means of meetings between a committee of the employer's group and another of the General Council. Their function is to do the detail work and prepare drafts for the full conference to consider. It is of the greatest interest to note that the first public declaration of the joint bodies has concerned the problem of monetary policy. This fact alone lifts the discussion on a plane far removed from that of Pleasant Sunday Afternoon talks on industrial relations. In anticipation of the merging of the treasury note issue with the Bank of England note issue, and the consequent need for defining the future of the fiduciary issue, the employers and trade-unionists, both advised, no doubt, by their respective financial pundits, have united in saying that industry needs a more elastic credit policy than has been allowed in the past, and that a public inquiry into the best form of monetary policy is needed before Baldwin and Churchill tie the nation up to a system that may be obsolete. Since then, Churchill has announced that greater elasticity will be provided, though the bill he has introduced for the purpose is not regarded by industry as satisfactory. Still, the Mond-Turner conference, as people call it, has undoubtedly scored a point. The two sides appear also to have reached agreement on the recognition of trade unions, and on the victimization of members of labor unions. No details of this agreement are available as yet, but it is obvious that for the Trade Union Congress these thorny problems are of primary importance if the workers generally are to be reassured as to the *bona fides* of the Mond group.

Other knotty problems remain: the rationalization of industry, unemployment, the status of the workers, sharing the proceeds of industry, and others. Time will show whether progress will also be made in regard to these. But at any rate it is an interesting experiment, and while it will not solve the "social question," and is not intended to, it is, nevertheless, full of significance. It is likely that a permanent Council of Industry will emerge from the conferences. Possibly we are even witnessing the development of an entirely new status, both for the workers and for industry as a whole. Who knows but what the upshot may be the evolution of a Corporative State, founded not on Fascist bayonets, but on the spontaneous activities of organized Labor and organized Capital? If such speculations appear too fanciful, one can at least reflect on the certainty that in these conferences industrial problems are being faced in a way that is new in the history of the labor movement.

LABORITE.

London.

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# The Kellogg Plan and the European Powers

IT is difficult at this distance to be certain what effect Sir Austen Chamberlain's reply to the Kellogg note has produced in America. The despatches from Washington report him—I do not know upon what grounds—as optimistic. If that is true, he seems easily satisfied. He has got an acceptance *sans phrase* from Germany; what is practically an acceptance from Japan and Italy; from France he has received what is, in essence, an alternative plan incompatible with his own; and from Sir Austen a note which, while it is full of enthusiasm for the project itself, suggests so many modifications of principle as to be interpreted throughout France as support for the latter's attitude. Meanwhile, it is clear from statements like that of M. Zaleski for Poland that the smaller European powers, whose association with the pact Mr. Kellogg did not propose, are fairly generally on the side of France. For them the finality of Versailles is fundamental, and they will not abandon war as an instrument of policy if it means the possible alteration of Versailles by diplomatic negotiation in the future.

Liberal opinion in England is whole-heartedly favorable to the Kellogg proposals. That was clear before the Chamberlain note from the speech of Mr. Lloyd George. It has been made even more clear since from his regret that Sir Austen did not accept the proposal without modifications of any kind. This has been the attitude of all the radical press, and even of such left-wing bodies as the Union of Democratic Control. No big change in pacific machinery since 1919 has secured so large a body of reasoned assent.

What, then, is the explanation of Sir Austen's attitude? It is, I think, two-fold. Boldly to support the Kellogg proposals means to admit a fundamental divergence in outlook between ourselves and France. Sir Austen, who "loves France like a woman," shrinks from that prospect. He dare not, in the light of English opinion, take up the French view whole-heartedly. He dare not say, as he would like to say, that, in his view, Locarno makes such a pact unnecessary. He therefore hopes so to water down its proposals that a "formula" may be found which will combine the American and French proposals. M. Briand said only the other day, after conversation with Sir Austen, that such a formula is desirable and will be sought.

What would be left of the Kellogg proposals when it was found, it would not be difficult to see. War would be forbidden except (1) when it is for self-defense or (2) for the commitments entered into at Locarno or (3) under the responsibilities of the Covenant or (4) to safeguard certain special interests of the signatories. War, in other words, would be forbidden except in the cases where it is likely to occur. Every war seems to someone a war of self-defense, and every war seems to someone an attempt to safeguard certain special interests. With a good deal of skill, Sir Austen, in this latter regard, has used the American insistence that the Monroe Doctrine is sacrosanct to insist, also, that for us a region we are all agreed to identify as Egypt is sacrosanct. Whatever we do there, the pact is not to apply, because it is a special interest of ours. And if that is admitted, it is clear that every signatory is entitled to make similar provision. France can say that Poland is *its* special interest. Japan is clearly about to take up a similar attitude about Manchuria. Poland will argue that the non-Polish territories she has absorbed since Versailles are her special interest. By the time a conference has discussed the Bill of Exceptions to the pact, it is clear enough that what remains will not be worth having.

Liberal pacifist opinion in England, I should say, is, above all, anxious that Mr. Kellogg will not be misled by any superficial enthusiasm for his pact such as the Chamberlain note implies. He should insist that the pact as such is not a document to which any reservations can be attached. Either he is going to persuade the powers to renounce war, or he is not. In a renunciation of war there is nothing incompatible with either Locarno or the Covenant of the League. And from the angle of Europe, there is great importance in a general adoption of a policy which puts the power of America behind opinion making for peace. It is true that the American proposal will involve going further than at present America is prepared to do. If power X violates the pact after signing it, what is to be done about X is a problem Mr. Kellogg has not faced. But if the pact is signed *simpliciter,* he will have to face it. America, in other words, will be driven by the logic of its own proposal to share in the duty of seeing that a state does not wreck the peace with impunity.

But if Mr. Kellogg really intends a pact which does what he wants it to do, he must give Sir Austen's note short shrift. He must say that peace is the end and all other matters are subordinate to it; that alongside that end, he will recognize no exceptions or special privileges. It is, in the view of most radicals here, better not to have a pact at all than to have one which represents any surrender to

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the French conception of Versailles and its sequels as the unchangeable basis of world-organization, and peace as of quite inferior import to that. Sir Austen's note is a bridge over which the European powers (apart from Germany) will easily and naturally pass to the French position. Only a steadfast attitude from America will prevent that disaster. And if it occurs, there will pass away the most unique opportunity since the War of insisting that the League of Nations is an instrument for peace, and not a weapon to defend the settlement of 1919.

London. HAROLD J. LASKI.

# Washington Notes

IT SEEMS to me an interesting thing that the Republican party, having clearly selected its best available man for the presidency, should be so singularly unenthusiastic about him. As to his mental and moral qualifications for the job, there is no room for argument at all. Yet here is his party, which at one time or another has forced into the White House men who lacked one of these qualifications and in at least one instance a man who lacked both, in what can only be described as a sour state of mind concerning its present offering. To explain this condition would require vastly more space than is allotted to me here. It opens far too wide a range for philosophic speculation, and the only practical thing to do is to confine myself to the two basic reasons why I believe the Hoover nomination, which I modestly mention was indicated in these letters as long as eight months ago, sits so heavily on the party stomach. First, of course, is the fact that he is entirely without any real political background, that he has behind him not even a trace of a vote-getting record, and that in him is an inherent, if at this time well concealed, contempt for the practical boys of politics and their sordid little ways.

It is true that in the pre-convention Hoover campaign, with its Rush Hollands, Goose-neck Bill McDonnells, Ben Davises and Perry Howards, there is much to disprove this contention. It is true that there were then and are now attached to his cause some of the most off-color birds, black and white, to be found in the whole political aviary. It is true, too, that no outward or visible sign of shrinking from these fellows, no disposition to repel support of any kind, color, creed, or character has been evinced by Herbert at any minute in those long months while he laboriously built up that effective and efficient political machine which flattened out at Kansas City one of the most formidable combinations of politicians and financial interests that has been formed in a good many years—a lot more formidable than showed on the surface or was ever indicated in the daily press.

Nevertheless, they smell it. Somehow they sense that inside, Herbert Hoover, like Woodrow Wilson, hates the breed and is invisibly holding his nose while he deals with them, bargains, fraternizes and accepts support. Unquestionably they are right about Hoover, but they need give themselves no fear about him. He won't hurt them. He will not recognize the wrong fellows in the several states as did Wilson. If and when he gets into the White House, he will not call out the guard or put the dogs on the boys who run the local machines.

Not at all. Herbert, having entered politics, has become a politician. Having become a politician, he will be a good politician. If these smooth fellows who have in the past run the amazingly successful Al Smith campaigns in New York—if the redoubtable Al himself, with his galaxy of advisers, political, financial and journalistic, thinks that there will not be brains, guts, intelligence and money behind this Hoover campaign this time, they are vastly mistaken. He does not like the practical side of this business—and never will—but this will not prevent him from being more practical and more intelligently practical in the conduct of this campaign than any candidate either party has had in a long time. Just as it was plain to him that the only way to get the nomination was to get down on the practical political level and wrestle around in the muck for the delegates, it will be equally plain to him that it will not be possible to win the election unless the organization in each important state functions 100 percent, and that the only way to get these organizations to function that way is to see that they are effectively nourished. He will not like this sort of stuff and he will not like the sort of men he is required to deal with or trust them to deal for him, but he will do it all the same. The main trouble right now is that the state leaders who were with him before the convention, as well as those who were not, do not know this.

The other reason for the lack of present enthusiasm over the Hoover candidacy is fear of the engineering mind, and this, curiously enough, is current not only in political but in banking cicles. It is so new and untried in public office of any kind, so completely dissociated from any thought of the presidency. It fills them with suspicion. It means construction, and they do not want to be constructive. It carries the idea of building, and they don't like that idea. All they want to do is to hold what they have and get a little more in the same way they got that. It foreshadows, for the party people in Senate and House, forced marches under real leadership. They have had nothing like that in the Republican party since Roosevelt left the White House, and they don't want it. Believe me, they don't want it! All they want to do is mull around in circles and keep things as they are, which splendid ambition is shared with them by the 287 high-bracket boys, who, according to the New York Times, have annual incomes in excess of a million dollars, 281 of whom, I am told, are now, or will be shortly, solidified as usual behind the Republican candidate for the presidency. Why wouldn't they be? Look at that platform. It is all very well to say platforms do not mean anything, but they at least indicate a frame of mind. But they need not worry. There is no real dynamite in Herbert so far as either business or politics is concerned.

As to the outlook, it would be absurd to discuss it seriously at this time. Hoover has been nominated under exceptional and extraordinary conditions. The myth that

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Mr. Mellon was a national leader holding the balance of power in his party was ridiculously exploded at Kansas City by the preposterous and pudding-headed Vare. The anti-Hoover activities of the President of the Pennsylvania Railroad and one of the lesser partners of the Morgan firm on the convention scene were futile and foolish. There is soreness in Wall Street, and soreness in the Corn Belt. There is rancor and bitterness here, there and around. Reports since the convention from New York are that the outlook is black. There will be, it is said, an Al Smith Republican League formed in the city in which will be enrolled some perfectly astonishing names. So it is said—but I do not believe it. This is June and the election is four months off. This is being written in that interesting interval between the two conventions. Until the Democrats act at Houston it would be silly for anyone to form a real judgment; there is little upon which to base even a hunch. All that seems reasonably certain is that in this fight there will be more elements of real uncertainty than anyone now living can remember in any former campaign. A large number of great and good men, including some of our most erudite Washington correspondents, will probably go completely cuckoo trying to explain them before the middle of September.

T. R. B.

Washington.

# Diamond Lil

WRITING about Miss Mae West is a performance that a critic may well dread. There is on one side the chance of condescension, a certain tendency to patronize a popular instance in art and find it after all really quite good. But clearly what is good in any piece of art is good, and that is the end of the matter. It is good by being alive, complete in itself and infectious; to confuse the issue with social strata, with concessions to the popular needs and tastes, or with recognized standards in form and values, is only foolish as well as stuffy.

Democracy, however, does not encourage this sort of condescension from culture, and in America nowadays we need fear it little. What we can fear is the opposite. The anxiety to discover high art in low places, to find that somebody's somersaults are better than Nijinsky, a new high wall of any sort as good as the Parthenon, and so on and so on, is something too often seen in the last few years to be surprising. These sudden discoveries, these promotions to a place on the map of art, are plausible and flattering to a society where one man is as good as another and where an absence of culture and knowledge is only too grateful for a release from all necessity of them. These discoveries may show a nose for talent, a free eye, in the discoverer, or a blind ignorance of what is art, or a desire in him to be startling or smart; or—as Ariosto said of his house, *sed apta mihi*—a pleasure in finding what suits his own taste.

Of Miss Mae West's adventures in "Sex" last year much was said, and who does not know how frequent, *chic* or personal it was to say that this show was fine, grand, swell, the best in town, I take everybody, *et cetera, et cetera?* I saw some of "Sex" and found the play itself so dull, and so much of Miss West's performance crude, ugly and idle, that I could go only so far with these "Sex" enthusiasts as to say that this actress had an almost startling deliberation on the stage, a curious magnetism, colossal insolence and, perhaps, daring—the degree to which Miss West is daring and to which she merely follows her simple intuition is still a mystery to me—and finally a remarkable voice, a voice whose lowest tone, nasal, but resonant, carries to the farthest corners of the theater. As everyone knows, the sum of these qualities, plus the play itself, brought the event to a box-office success and the star to ten days in jail.

"Diamond Lil" will not supply as much entertainment as "Sex" did for these special tastes, for people who looked on at that performance with raw thrills, or with the amused scandalization of slumming parties, or with delight in such sure, bold, brazen theatrical effects. "Diamond Lil" is as daring in the end, the same sexy morsels, embraces, interventions of the law with rank suspenses, frank speeches, underworlds and so on. But it is more covered, continuous and studied than the other production, and the crowds of characters, the costuming and vaudevillistic intervals, pull the whole of this later play into a more familiar style, less crudely and sheerly singular than "Sex" appeared to be.

It is the costuming, indeed, that is one of Miss West's brightest inspirations for "Diamond Lil." The play itself is absurd. It tells the story of the gang-leader's mistress, with a past in Chicago, where she got her start with the diamonds and the title. On New York's East Side she now flourishes. She falls in love with a Salvation Army captain, buys him a house for meetings. In the end he turns out to be a detective, the gang is arrested, the officer and Diamond Lil are left, to marry or what they choose—she asserts that she had always known he could be had. Most of the lines are tosh and worse, except for some that have a certain plain sense or drama to them: they go largely to the star. And so putting this play back into the nineties and giving Lil the clothes, the great hats and golden wig of Lillian Russell, was a very smart thing to do; it gives the whole affair a kind of irresponsibility, since we grant almost anything to those inferior days and the people in them; it lets in the indulgence of sentiment; it gives also a picturesqueness amounting to a kind of glamor.

Glamor Miss West herself undoubtedly has, a kind of far-offness, a foot-lighted difference, an unpredictable something about her that we watch as we do animals in a cage. I delight in this point. It illustrates and rubs in the fact of art's apartness from nature, its parallel character. Here is a stage figure who is not one of those players, however admirable, with whom we can feel at home, knowing that they are the same sort of human beings as we are, save for a desire to imitate or to exhibit themselves, or both. You watch Miss West without this easy understanding and also without falling asleep. Whatever ideas or conceptions she may or may not have, she is alive on the stage as nobody is in life, she shines, she astonishes—shocks, if you like—engages and puzzles you.

If the play is largely bosh, it is not essentially more

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so than many others. It uses every tried and trusted trick, hokum, motive and stage expectation, but always shrewdly. It is well cast, or shall we say that the parts are fitted with great knack to the respective actors? For its purposes it is very remarkably directed. Two-thirds of the last act consist of a dancing, singing, character scene, in which up-town society visits the saloon and sees a sort of vaudeville exhibition—for which the ensemble playing is the best in New York. The skill of the performers and their effect of happiness in performing is sure-fire; and their seeming delight in the heroine's presence brings the star system to an ironical perfection—who else in any company in town enjoys such satellites on the stage around her? In this "Diamond Lil" all roads lead indeed to Rome.

This Rome of all roads is Miss West, and we return to her. I find myself seeking the right tone, so as not to be too easy and facetious on the one hand, and not, on the other, to feel myself guyed, comical and negligently ponderous, talking solemnly of her. I have no idea what is in her head or what she thinks of the whole occasion that she promotes, just as I have no idea, standing before the bars of circus cages, what is going on in the eyes looking out at me. I gather, however, that the performance is more or less on the level, that she sees herself seriously enough; if, for nothing else, by a certain absorbed and naïve physical egotism. She may, for all I know, even think the play itself that she has written a great drama; I am sure she knows it is no worse than most, only more firmly and audaciously ladled on. Where there is no delicacy of mind there may be a kind of animal subtlety and astuteness. An intuition of theater technique, a past in vaudeville to test and clinch it, and a cynical perception of its results—and you have Miss West's stage method.

And nobody, seeing her play, can fail to wonder at that audacity of leisure, motion which becomes an intensity of movement by its continuity, but is almost stillness because it is so slow. The whole body—not a beautiful one—is supple, flowing, coolly insinuating, the voice and enunciation only more so. From such a quality and aim ensues the quality of the whole performance. The person of the actress is not really alluring or exciting; the whole result of her presence and her acting is something less usual—for there are numerous stage ladies whose following comes from charm and allure—and more abstract, impressive, ironical and teasing in its unreality, and unforgettable. What is created by Miss West finally is as remote as Sarah Bernhardt's art in "La Tosca," no more accessible, no more actual, no less purely theatrical, though the plane of it may be, of course, another matter.

There is about this playing of Miss West's one final point, on which the best comment is a sentence in Mr. Struthers Burt's "They Could Not Sleep": "Democracy is only bearable when it is good-natured." You may watch her performance and take it any way you like; the theater, you perceive, is a place for your pleasure.

My notion is that "Diamond Lil" is the popular theater's joke on our theater of culture; and that Mae West is a part of the secret of Pan before the footlights.

STARK YOUNG.

# Gigantic Dreams

WHAT is it that gives to an ether-dream its peculiar quality, its peculiar difference from the ordinary dream? I suppose there is a simple enough physiological explanation; perhaps the Freudians have had a shot at explaining its characteristic formations; but if there has been any *reductio ad absurdum* of it, whether physiological or psychological, I have not seen it. That the ether-dream does differ, essentially, from other dreams, anyone knows who has ever taken ether. It is, to the ordinary dream, what the epic is to the short story. It is gigantic; it is grandiose; it transcends the limits of time and space; it is cosmic; and when it is at its best, it gives to the dreamer an annihilating sense of understanding, a divine comprehensiveness of foreknowledge and memory. There is always one moment, in the ether-dream, when everything, the whole universe, becomes blindingly clear and simple. The sensation is, perhaps, a sensation of light—which makes one wonder whether the dream occurs usually as one is first returning to consciousness, first relaxing one's eyelids. And there is usually, also, a rather terrifying use of repetition. The pattern of the dream unfolds, and then returns upon itself and unfolds again. The movement, the drama, of the dream is as likely as not cyclic, and one draws from it an appalling sense of the everlasting determinism of things.

I have heard it said that hasheesh, also, gives one this sense of cosmic consciousness; but in that case my own two experiences with hasheesh could not have been wholly successful. On one of these occasions, I dreamed that the world was merely a colossal wall-paper design: a design of twined leaves and flowers, and all of it *moving*. It had no depth—it was flat, two-dimensional—and I myself, curiously without identity, was simply a part of this growing Vine, indistinguishable from it, and unrecognizable as a separate entity. There was, however, no sense of understanding in this dream, no sensation of light. The element of determinism was present, in the fixed and terrifying and inescapable movement of the vine; but there was no instant, as in the ether-dream, when everything became marvellously understandable.

Of my first ether-dream I remember very little—only, in fact, that it seemed to have been influenced by Lewis Carroll; for the world, in this vision, was a chess-board world, and all the moves in its were as pre-ordained as the moves of knights and bishops. My second dream was better, though it lacked the characteristic repetitiousness. In this dream I set sail with Columbus, as a sailor on the third of his caravels. The sensation of mere *voyage* was tremendous and timeless. It seemed to go on forever. And the fact that it was ended, for me, by my falling overboard in mid-Atlantic, rendered all the more vivid this sense of its endlessness. I fell overboard, I was drowned, I sank to the bottom of the sea, I funnelled down on to the ocean-bed as a silver-threaded spiral of foam, I became an undistinguished oyster shell. There was a strong smell of oakum; I experienced a sensation of sadness and remoteness and lostness; a translucent brightness, as of a clear twilight, was around me. And it was at this instant that I suddenly understood everything. I looked up—for apparently, although I had become an oyster shell, I could still see—and saw the three keels far

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above me, like three small purple clouds moving across a sky. And I said to myself, half regretfully and half amusedly, "Good Lord, I won't be there when they discover America!" It was as I said this that I felt divinely omniscient. For I knew, vaguely, that America had been already discovered—had, in fact, been discovered four hundred years ago; but I also knew that it was not *yet* discovered. I had stepped clear out of time and space; my consciousness was both before and after the event; I had become God. I felt a kind of pity and contempt for poor Columbus, who knew so little; and for myself also I felt pity, because I knew so much. I knew everything that was in store for Columbus, and everything that would occur in America; it all unrolled before me in a single flash. But I felt, as well, with a last pang of my own dissolving identity, that I had myself lost a glorious opportunity. The world had been both found and lost, but all in my vatic imagination.

My third ether-dream was colossal, but unfortunately a great part of it defies transcription in language. For this was a dream of Creation: in this dream I witnessed the creation of the world. I suspect that the dream began instantly after I had lost consciousness, and that the shape of the ether-cone, a white disk, supplied an important motive for it. The first part of the dream was chaotic. It was, in fact, Chaos. After a while, I was aware of an emerging solar-system—it was here, in the guise of spinning planets, that the ether-cone was of assistance. Of this stage in the dream-creation I can remember very little: all I retain is an awareness of a slow and magnificent and timeless *process,* and of myself as a disembodied witness. Ultimately, the theater of the dream narrowed. The scene was now the earth alone, and I was watching the evolution of life on its surface. Here again I was a witness of what was at first a mere chaos of the amorphous: but then, after ages had passed, and ages of ages, the shapes of living things began to appear, to evolve; and eventually Man himself arose. I now watched the development of consciousness in Man. During the earlier stages of this evolution I experienced the same sensation of timelessness that had attended my voyage with Columbus. The light was a half-light; the dream was confused, rich, profound, a welter of fecundity; the progress and change seemed to be infinitesimal. It was after a veritable eternity that Man at last achieved *consciousness,* became a civilized being with an inward-turning awareness. The dream, in other words, had now entered upon the historical era; and at this point its speed was greatly accelerated. Phases of consciousness succeeded each other like so many flashes. I was aware, somehow, that we had reached the fifth or sixth century B. C. And at this point the dream hit upon a device for the demarcation of one phase of sophistication from another, the progress from consciousness to consciousness of consciousness, and then to consciousness of consciousness of consciousness, and so on, which showed an extraordinary ingenuity. To begin with, some perfectly simple remark was made: I forget what it was, but it was something as obvious as "Here we are, then." This remark represented the first stage of consciousness. An age then passing in a flash, and a second stage of sophistication being reached, the remark was repeated, but this time with double quotation: " "Here we are, then." " Another flash of time, and the remark was again repeated, this time with three quotation marks—" " "Here we are, then." " " And now the whole dream concentrated itself on a kind of visual image of quotation marks, quotation marks at either end of a simple statement, building themselves out at either end of the statement into infinity. The simple statement became, with each addition, more appallingly and unfathomably complicated: it had become, in fact, the world itself: it had become *everything that was knowable.* The unceasing repetition, with its increasingly terrifying burden of self-consciousness, became more rapid, more automatic, it took on a rhythmical mechanical clack: and suddenly, then, it reached its *reductio ad absurdum* in *myself.* All this consciousness had, at last, narrowed itself down to me—to me, lying on an operating table, with an ether-cone being lowered above my face. My name was shouted recurringly, megaphoned as by a train-starter: the voice rose to a scream at the end of the name: and abruptly the dream began all over again. I was once more witnessing the development of the world from Chaos, my own identity again completely lost. And then the evolution of life, of Man, of consciousness, with its ultimate focus upon myself. . . .

I do not know how often the dream repeated itself: I suspect that the repetitions were not as careful in detail as the first version, and that all that was aimed at was the *effect* of repetition. The raw material having been provided by the first version, the dream could thereafter merely indicate with a gesture. At all events, the dream became cyclic, and I beheld, innumerable times, the evolution of the world to its final flowering—magnificent egotism, profound solipsism!—in my own consciousness. Everything had become intelligible: the world no longer had any secrets from me. I now knew the world for what it was—a mere senseless nightmare of fatalistic and orderly but meaningless change; a mechanical ring from which one was never destined to escape.

CONRAD AIKEN.

# A New York Diary

YOUNG men interested in the arts usually do not choose motion pictures as a career, as they do painting or writing. The movies are directed by accidents, people who have failed at something else, actors who couldn't keep the waistline down, bright nephews of investing uncles. An interesting exception to this rule is Anthony Asquith, son of the late British Prime Minister, who deliberately chose the studios when he didn't have to, and has made a film, "Shooting Stars," which was shown at the Cameo Theater, New York, last week. This was an especially titled and edited "American edition," and one does not know what changes may have been made in it. As it stands, it is a fairly simple melodrama of life in the motion picture studios. A film heroine is married to her leading man, she falls in love with a "comic," the husband discovers their affair and proposes to discard his wife. She has just signed an important American contract containing a scandal clause, and to avoid the divorce court, she tries to kill her husband by putting a real bullet into a prop-

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erty gun. The Hamlet device is used, in a sequence of great suspense; the husband is not killed, and the lover is. In the end, the husband has become a distinguished director and, without recognizing her, employs his former wife, now a wretched extra, to walk once across a scene.

The camera work is noticeably good, a fact which is the more noteworthy since most English films are so atrocious in this respect. There are many shots of great beauty, and some in which unusual camera angles are employed in the German style, with success. The early scenes are too slowly paced for an American audience, but the climactic ones are finely conceived and skillfully done. Mr. Asquith has a good deal of fun with the standardized American films of inferior quality. He shows the making of a typical "Western" and a comedy film, and gives passages from each, with their silliness and falsity maliciously underscored. "Shooting Stars" reveals an adult and sensitive intelligence and a mastery of medium which make Mr. Asquith worth watching.

"Here's Howe" and "Present Arms" are smart musical comedies that fall short of the first rank; excellent entertainment for occasional playgoers, yet the material of each, while good, has lost its nap in other seasons. "Present Arms," the leather-neck show, follows too hard on the heels of the gob show, "Hit the Deck," which, while no louder, was considerably funnier. Do not infer that "Present Arms" is being sniffed at. Its predecessor has gone its way, and any who missed seeing Charles King's nautical courtship of Louise Groody should make up for it by watching him make amphibious love to Flora Le Breton. The chorus has been drilled within an inch of its life by Busby Berkeley, who in the course of a few shows has gained such a reputation for this work as to earn him an invitation to demonstrate jazz dances at Salzburg. Berkeley himself does creditably in a speaking part, dances, and falls—or did fall on the night that concerns this diary—most naturally on his directorial ear; surely to the consuming joy of his victims if this landing was a forced one. The same chorus sings splendidly; the volume and quality of tone obtained by the girls would have caused a sensation a few years ago. Richard Rodgers' score is without any natural hits, but all of the half-dozen printed songs are above standard; "You Took Advantage of Me" and "Do I Hear You?" are the favorites, but less unusual than "Blue Ocean Blues." Joyce Barbour is a valuable asset to the production, for there are too few beautiful girls who dance well, and whose noses wrinkle up when they smile. The scene, by the way, is laid in Hawaii, but there are no hulas or cereal skirts and hardly a sweet *lei lehua;* only a few incidental natives, the pretty ladies, and the big tough Marines.

The novelty of plot in "Here's Howe" is strictly confined to the situation of two young people (Allen Kearns and Irene Delroy) in a model automobile factory wishing to marry and run a combined filling station and tea room. The show will run, not on this conceit, but on the dancing, the music, and the special bits. The dances are Sammy Lee's, Mr. Berkeley's senior and peer in his field; the music introduces the ubiquitous Roger Wolfe Kahn as a composer, but in collaboration with the experienced and talented Joe Meyer, of "Blue River"; which wrote what is undisclosed, but their work is polite and tuneful. "Crazy Rhythm," which is not so very crazy, and "Imagination" will unobtrusively pair themselves on many phonograph records. Fuzzy Knight, one of the wildest nuts uncracked, creates a stir with some valuable innovations in vocal jazz. One should enjoy hearing him furnish an obligato for Ukulele Ike, who was pioneer in turning the tables on the laughing saxophone. William Frawley, a good low-comedy thug, surprises everyone by taking a chorus of the song hit and taking bows for it, and Peggy Chamberlain, who doesn't look it, turns out to be a strong lady and an acrobat. Ben Bernie and his band are in action, and Bernie, who obtrudes himself to a poisonous degree when he conducts, also plays a substantial part in the show. In so doing, he reveals that his trouble has been a suppressed but fully justified conviction that he is an actor, coupled with a failure to realize that, in technical language, his own gags are terrible. After this he should be allowed to blow off steam through someone else's lines in every show he plays, on the condition that he say nothing with a baton in his hand.

Madison Square Garden—so called, of course, because it is not in Madison Square, or a garden—was the scene last week of a "Dance Marathon," in which several hundred young men and women competed to see who could longest endure the agony of dancing sixty minutes out of every seventy-five, twenty-four hours a day. When I dropped in, one midnight, the affair had been in progress for ninety-eight hours, and the number of couples had dwindled from almost two hundred to thirty-four. Overhead, great clusters of white lights beat down upon an arena floored with some unyielding substance which looked like marble. The dancers moved around an oval track, while the central space was occupied by officials' tents (set on rugs of imitation grass), press tables, massage machines and medical equipment. Music was supplied by an exhausted band, up among the spectators, which from time to time was drowned out by a caterwauling tenor whose voice blared through a badly adjusted microphone. Most of the dancers moved at the slowest possible shuffle, or walked side by side, arms entwined. Some wore eyeshades to cut off the glare; several of the gentlemen had not shaved since the affair started. Their feet and legs were bandaged, their clothing ranged from party costumes to the things you would wear for a transcontinental automobile tour. As the band thumped away at "Let a Smile Be Your Umbrella," the dancers shuffled on, round and round. Some gazed glassily at nothing, and spoke no word; it was said that one girl, the night before, had been unconscious for nearly five hours, but she kept her feet and her partner had pushed her along until she woke up.

During their fifteen-minute rest periods, the contestants lay on cots in little red and white striped tents around the edges of the arena, and were massaged and otherwise rehabilitated. The incessant loud-speaker was always announcing prizes donated by some of the few and bored spectators in the hall—$25 for the best waltzing exhibition, a basket of roses to the best-dressed girl, and so on.

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Many of the dancers paid no heed to these announcements, but shuffled on, dogged and half-dead, saving their energies in the hope of being the last surviving couple and winning the $5,000 to be awarded to that hardy pair. A sickly odor of commercialism hung over the whole enterprise; the man who engineered the business hoped to get his money back from the spectators who would come to see so much pain endured in such a senseless cause. In other cities, these affairs have proved quite profitable—to the promoter. The dancers, at best, of course, have one chance in two hundred of getting anything out of their experience except agony.

# *CORRESPONDENCE*

## Munson, Warren and Tate

SIR: It would be more interesting to enter into debate with the reviewer of my book, "Destinations," than to write a letter of correction, but since Mr. Tate, in your number of May 16, formulates no issues that I can discern and does attribute to me certain assumptions which he regards as idiotic, I should like to record my amazement at being saddled with them, for I also happen to regard them as idiotic. Two statements, in particular, coming from a reviewer of Mr. Tate's proved caliber, seem unaccountable to me. He says that my "analysis of Dreiser's motives as a writer actually proceeds as literary psychoanalysis" rather than as a study of behavior in the form of writing, and he says that I confess I have not read the "Mahabharata" though citing it as a possible source of contemporary inspiration, and that this is symptomatic of a disposition to take short cuts.

But what I took pains to make clear was that I had not read the "Mahabharata" *in toto* (a steady task for two or three years, since it is equivalent in length to sixty-odd bulky novels and immeasurably above any novel in the kind of understanding required): further, I wrote as explicitly as I could about my present acquaintance with that work, for it has not been unopened by me as Mr. Tate might appear to imply: and furthermore, I prefaced my own remarks with a long quotation from an authority on the "Mahabharata" on whom the burden of recommendation really rests. With regard to the treatment of Dreiser's motivation, there is nothing to reply but this: if the historical conception of a dominant motive in individual psychology manifesting itself in no matter what circumstances an individual may be placed seems to Mr. Tate to be the same thing as the compensatory devices the psychoanalysts fancy they see, then it is time either for a little more psychological education or for some of that discrimination that he has revealed in minor literary problems.

It happens that in the same issue an earlier book of mine, a monograph on Robert Frost, is reviewed by another ex-Fugitive, Mr. Robert Penn Warren. He also assumes a graybeard air and speaks of my "apparently unassimilated learning," though he, no more than Mr. Tate, condescends, as is customary among the learned, to substantiate this charge. Mr. Warren does manage, however, in what may in charity be called hasty writing rather than inattentive reading, to subtitle my book wrongly, calling it a "study in Sensibility and Common Sense," instead of "Sensibility and Good Sense," and to overlook altogether the capital distinction of the little work, which is precisely the difference between good sense and common sense.

New York City. GORHAM B. MUNSON.

SIR: Mr. Allen Tate, in his review of Gorham Munson's "Destinations," says "the discipline of literature is the devoted study of its texts." May I suggest that Mr. Tate study Mr. Munson's text a little more devotedly and endeavor to become "disciplined" enough to quote fairly? This is Mr. Tate: "in the essay on Hart Crane he [Munson] says that 'most poetry [falls] short of wisdom.'" Then Tate proceeds to write a very silly paragraph about wisdom in a vacuum. It is silly because, obviously, he has no meaning for the term wisdom. It's just a word to bandy about. Now the point is that Mr. Munson, in the sentence from which Mr. Tate extracts five words, does give a meaning for the term, and puts it in italics to boot. He says in full: "Great poetry is an addition to wisdom, since it springs from wisdom. Whereas most poetry, including Crane's, is on the terrestrial side of knowledge and hence short of wisdom, since the latter is but the *realization* of knowledge." It looks to this reader as if Mr. Tate wished by his wrenched quotation to destroy all signs of thought on Mr. Munson's part in order to indulge in a little thoughtlessness himself.

Weehawken, N. J. LEWIS BENSON.

SIR: I am not aware that I presented Mr. Munson with idiotic assumptions: the assumptions underlying Mr. Munson's book I have great sympathy with—the disorder, the shallowness, the immaturity of the bulk of contemporary American literature. I regard nothing about his book as idiotic. I simply find that his method is not informed. Mr. Munson answers me on two points; I reply to them in order:

(1) The description of his essay on Dreiser as "literary psychoanalysis" needs qualification. I should have written: "It is nearer psychoanalysis than Behaviorism." He objects to having his study of a "dominant motive" described as psychoanalysis, yet it should be pointed out that Dr. Watson has nothing to say of motives, dominant or otherwise (there are patterns of behavior), and the essay is thus nearer the literary psychology of Brooks and Krutch than to any technique that Watson has developed. Even if the essay were close to Watson, could Mr. Munson like "literary Behaviorism" better? If he wishes to give a Behavioristic account of Dreiser *as a writer,* he should ask Dr. Watson to invent an instrument for the measuring of books; if he wishes to give a Behavioristic account of him *as a man,* he should take him to a laboratory, test his laryngeal activity, his salivary reactions, the tone of his autonomic system, etc. Since Mr. Munson did not see in my review the issue that this point raises, may I point it out here? It is the relation between scientific methods and literary criticism. One of my objections to his book is that it ignores that issue. A critic who employs any method derived from the sciences is obligated to defend it. Is it possible that Mr. Munson really discerned the issue, and obscured it by attacking me on the technical accuracy of a single statement?

(2) This point, too, he obscures by attacking a single statement. My point about the "Mahabharata" holds whether he has read some of this epic or none at all. A literary critic is obliged to read works that he recommends entire. Authoritarianism has never gone so far as Mr. Munson seems to take it. It has been vested in institutions and in persons in so far as these persons stood for an institution or an idea; but never in persons as persons. Sometimes, of course, in persons as gods. I am sure that Mr. Munson abhors journalism; but in this matter he is a journalist; he accepts a value on hearsay.

Finally, the whole issue of my review was the question of literary discipline. As it concerns Mr. Munson, it comes to this: How does he know there is value in More and Babbitt? He admits that they get most of their strength from their sources; but has he read these? He takes a short cut to a philosophical viewpoint, and only the vocabulary of the viewpoint gets into the text. This is my chief objection to the book.

Mr. Benson's point is well taken. But my argument would have been the same had I quoted the whole passage. (The day of the ancient quarterly and the 5,000-word review is gone.) The point involved here is that the major or minor proportions of a given poem cannot be decided by an analysis of its content. Over such fundamental questions Mr. Munson walks lightly.

New York City. ALLEN TATE.

## A Good Word for the Immigrant

SIR: Since new attacks on the foreign-born element in America are constantly appearing, it may be well for someone to take up the thankless task of saying a good word for the immigrant. Any discussion of the problem may well take into account the following facts.

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1. Only 8 percent of our immigrant population have failed to learn English. In fifteen years' work among immigrants I have never found an American-born child of foreign parents who could not speak English.

2. Two-thirds of the illiterates in America are native-born. Since we now admit no illiterate immigrants, a generation from now the only illiterates in our country will be our native product.

3. The charge is made that immigrants gather in foreign-speaking colonies. This is no longer true, for the latest Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration says: "The newcomers are spreading more evenly throughout the country than before. No longer is there the same concentration of the flow to the congested centers of population of the East: on the contrary, there is a marked drift to the Central West and to the states beyond the Rockies."

Those of us who have been teaching English to the immigrant believe that the melancholy prophets who write of the Failure of the Melting-Pot would be helped if they went to the nearest night school and saw the Melting-Pot at work.

HERMANN STYLES FICKE.

Cambridge, Mass.

## In Defense of Professor Babbitt

SIR: As one of the former students of Irving Babbitt who owe him a vast debt of gratitude for orienting them amid the chaos of modern thought, I feel justified in answering the leading article of your Spring Book Section. In this, Professor Howard Mumford Jones seeks, by "cross-examining" Professor Babbitt, to show him to be a naïve sentimentalist, a muddle-headed romantic. To anyone who knows Mr. Babbitt's vast learning, coherent philosophy, and hard-headed intellect, this is puerile. Mr. Jones, it is evident, is more interested in being clever than in being accurate, in ridiculing Mr. Babbitt to his own exaltation than in meeting Mr. Babbitt honestly on the issues the latter raises. Such an article is a flagrant example of the kind of literary debate that too often goes on in our periodicals, in which the adversary, realizing that the indifferent reader will enjoy his blasts in proportion to their violence, becomes more concerned with being witty or satirical than with being truthful or wise.

In his first sentence Mr. Jones illustrates this observation. Mr. Babbitt's article in the February Forum, the basis for Mr. Jones', was not entitled "Mr. Mencken Cross-Examined," as Mr. Jones declares. That catch-line, which appears on the *cover,* was doubtless the work of an astute editor with an eye to sales. Mr. Babbitt's title was "The Critic and American Life." A small error this, but it raises, for one thing, doubts as to Mr. Jones' reliability. And for another, it helps explain Mr. Jones' naïve fancy that Mr. Babbitt had done Mr. Mencken the honor of being much wrought up about him, and of writing a whole article against him.

In fact, Mr. Jones goes so far as to think that Mr. Babbitt considers Mr. Mencken a source of modern ills, a "focus" of infection, whereas a candid reading shows that he considers him merely a striking symptom. After pointing out (page 164) that sentimentalism progresses from softness to hardness, from romantic "idealism" into Nietzscheanism, he gives Mencken as an example of the latter; and then, since he is addressing an American audience, he gives the alternative name "Menckenism" to the latter. He justifies the term as follows: ". . . Whatever one's opinion of Mr. Mencken as a writer and thinker, one must grant him representativeness. He is a chief prophet at present of those who deem themselves emancipated. . . ." It would seem foolish *a priori* to ascribe to any mature thinker so absurd a belief as that any one man can be wholly the origin of any broad social tendency; and in this case Mr. Jones does just that—with no justification from the text. One suspects that he does so for the sake of the *reductio ad absurdum* which he next attempts.

For, having set up a man of straw, Mr. Jones now knocks him down. Mr. Babbitt, he tells us, considers Mencken a source of modern ills; and he exclaims: "This method is not critical at all. For it attributes to a 'leader' all the vagaries which the lunatic fringe of any movement may possess. In its grossest form, it exhibits that ancient logical pitfall, the *post hoc ergo propter hoc* fallacy." Mr. Babbitt, says Mr. Jones, names Anderson and Dreiser as results of Mencken's influence. If that be the case, does not Mr. Babbitt assume that they have blindly followed the Baltimore journalist's lead? And then what becomes of the freedom of the will that Mr. Babbitt's system is built on? As climax Mr. Jones asks: "Of what is Mencken the product?" Since Mr. Babbitt mentions Nietzsche, Mr. Jones, in honesty, might have done so also, except that by doing so he would have spoiled his rhetorical question. But, in fact, nowhere in his article does Mr. Babbitt give any fair-minded reader justification for assuming that he considers Mencken, or Nietzsche, for that matter, anything but a representative and a partial mover in a tendency that includes him and many others. A fair reading of "Rousseau and Romanticism" shows that he does not even consider Rousseau as *wholly* a "source," or as *wholly* a "nightmare."

I wish I might have space to deal similarly with other of Mr. Jones' remarks, such as his assumption that Mr. Babbitt ignores, or approves of, faults in the Puritans, in spite of the fact that Mr. Babbitt takes time to point out some of them (page 165) himself! It would seem enough to discuss one more matter. Mr. Babbitt having censured the "American Tragedy" and "Manhattan Transfer" because built on a deterministic philosophy, Mr. Jones talks about "Antigone" and "Oedipus" as being equally deterministic. As though the very foundation of Greek tragedy, as of all great tragedy including Shakespeare's, were not the assumption that men and women have the power of choice: as though the denial of that assumption were not written in every line of Dreiser's work! The point of Sophocles' tragedy is that Oedipus *wills* to know the secret of his kingdom's woes, and *will not* be dissuaded. The point is that Antigone *wills* to bury her brother, and *will not* be stopped. What does Clyde Griffiths ever will to do? Mr. Dreiser's point, monotonously reiterated, is that that miserable youth is entirely the product of his environment, and that his "chemisms" made him a murderer!

Here is an obvious and fundamental distinction, and Mr. Babbitt is justified in emphasizing it. If Mr. Jones had cared to meet him on this ground, and debate the question of free will, he would also have been justified. He chooses, rather, to misrepresent Mr. Babbitt and to misunderstand Greek tragedy. The result, to the discerning, will not be to Mr. Babbitt's injury.

The fact is, that those who censure Mr. Babbitt, in my experience, show a unanimous unwillingness or inability to debate with him on fundamental grounds. They dislike Mr. Babbitt because he says harsh things about authors they like; their dislike is the real motive for their censure; and they seize on any kind of missile they can find handy. The result is merely another vindication of Mr. Babbitt's thesis—that we need more general critical intelligence—subjected to the law of measure.

ALAN REYNOLDS THOMPSON.

University of California, Berkeley, Calif.

## Pensions under Laissez-Faire

SIR: After having worked on the following case for the past six weeks, I have become convinced that every progressive editor should use his best efforts for the establishment of pension systems for aged employees.

M— F— of Cleveland, Ohio, was employed by the B— Company for twenty-six and one-half years. Six weeks ago he was told that his services were no longer needed; that his services were of such a character that he "could have a recommendation a yard long," but that, since he was now sixty-eight years of age, he was too old for the B— Company, and that he could now depend upon charity for the support of himself and family.

In an effort to save M— F—, we went to the president of the organization, but to no avail. It seems that a pension system is being favored now, and the several firms are gently easing their oldest employees out of the way so as to save themselves from paying them pensions!

MARTIN M. GOLDBERG.

Cleveland, O.

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# Viola Meynell

*A Girl Adoring, by Viola Meynell. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.*

VIOLA MEYNELL'S work lies open to that great risk of excellence in a limited field: that it can pass under the careless reader's eye as unremarkable. The cool style can be overlooked, because of its very evenness of structure; the characters, built up with the most circumspect observation and detail, may appear colorless to the attention which expects the at once brilliantly and carelessly pointed-up stock "humors" that, almost invariably, move through modern fiction. "A Girl Adoring" is Miss Meynell's sixth book to be published in America over a period of fifteen years, yet her work is almost unknown here. "Young Mrs. Cruse," a book of short stories published three years ago, gained her some critical praise and a careless comparison to Katherine Mansfield, whose method and point of view hers do not in the slightest degree resemble.

In "A Girl Adoring" she has succeeded again at the kind of task for which her talent is best suited; she has disposed with intelligent gravity one figure after another about the girl at the heart of the book, a girl taken by "the sweetness and terror" of first love. Her other novels have in the same way circled about such a girl—her heroines are childish women struck by a passion that troubles and unnerves them, conventional girls startled by a single emotion as relentless in their hearts as the drive of purpose in the will, or by two conflicting desires that go on at the same time, like two voices in music, not defeating each other, but rather aiding and enriching the nature that bears them, up to the moment when they must break apart for one to live at all. It is a difficult task to accomplish this analysis of a gentle mind shocked and torn by a force and agony with which it is unable to cope. Miss Meynell has always managed to bring such situations to life, with an art so quiet that it is but slowly recognized as also vigorous and startling.

Clair Vandeleyden lives with her brother, Morely, and his wife, Laura, in the country, where Morely cultivates his own land. She has a sister, Gilda, who, after a disastrous love-affair that continues for years, has married a man in public life and lives in London in the great world of fashion and affairs. Clair looks forward with a girl's expectation to visiting Gilda; in the hour before her departure she meets Richard Hague, a man who has recently bought a neighboring farm. The spell of London is broken; her visit becomes a long period of waiting until she can come back. When she does return, the interest and passion that she and Hague begin to feel for one another is cut across by the hungry, beautiful, listless person of Louise, a guest in Morely's house, who fastens her attentions upon Hague. Clair withdraws into her unhappiness; Hague's obstinacy keeps him from following her, until her suffering breaks his will as it has broken hers. This is the story, in the flat.

But from the first moment the characters are set apart completely from any company of named masks. Gilda is given first. "The passion that sapped the youth of this unfortunate girl was one of those guilty loves that anguish turns into more of a misfortune than a sin. Hardly a moralist who knew of her affair would have thought it necessary to pause and point out what heavy retribution would in justice be her lot—the punishment was too obvious. By the time her history with her lover had transformed her from a triumphant girl into a worn and exhausted woman, she had entered into that category of sufferers where saints and sinners are very much alike." Then Morely, the self-indulgent, the slave of moderation, at once kind and begrudging, who works hard, with a fine show of disinclination, whose heavy moods Clair tries to lighten for his wife, until she finds that Laura has made her own automatic adjustment to their weight. There is also Hague, whose stubbornness is the other side of his love. "From the moment she did not want him, he no longer wanted her. His command of himself was something more than the control of the outward signs that would have betrayed his loss; it was something between himself and himself. He was not the sort of man whose pride makes him wary that he may betray by a word or a look. He gave her up farther back than that, at the source of all looks and words." And Louise, who lives most in her beauty reflected in other people's behavior—"her conversation, what there is of it, is just as attractive as she happens to look while she speaks." And finally, there is Clair, humbly helping to burn tussocks of grass in Hague's water-meadows, or heading his sheep down a road in the darkness, keeping her misery so safely in her mind that it shows only as an accent to lesser miseries, as when she takes it as a personal affront that a fire has not been lighted in a cold room. These people have been imagined at their source, behind "all looks and words."

Miss Meynell's method is, in the first place, built upon perception so accurate that it takes on the quickening effect of apperception. No fantastic arrangement of motive and emotion balances upon a guessed-at factual underpinning. Without the benefit of any enlarged reasons that borrow terms from science or speculation, Miss Meynell works straight through the relations of her characters to each other and to their scene. Her people act logically within the bounds set for them, because their creator has observed the reason for those limits and has gauged their truth through both her heart and mind. Because she works in little, with no pretence of covering the length and breadth of human experience in a tragic stride, the major notes struck out of her small scheme sound with an added emphasis. Things are presented almost below their own level, but one can never doubt the wisdom of the reticence that places them there.

Her prose style has rejected every effect of distorting rhetoric, so that it sometimes seems to move only because the characters move within it. Long passages are as quiet as a sail big with wind, that stands still and yet gives motion. Her words give the same clear exposition to the unguarded gestures by which people betray themselves, to weather changing imperceptibly in the night, and to the strong hypocrisies of the human heart, that hides even from itself. She can exceed most easily the ready-made explanations of conduct and appearance, because her manner has the same rectitude and clarity as the thought that sets it free.

Miss Meynell in her earlier novels—"Modern Lovers," "Narcissus," "Columbine," and "Second Marriage"—tells always the simplest story—beyond the fields and house she has chosen, and the men and women within their confines, she does not hear the world or its echoes. Thus circumscribed, despair and delight can rise to their full. The numbered group of first-rate women novelists have always realized completely the dramatic uses of such a walled-in stage. Many times, things seen or heard are presented so intensely that it seems that other senses are struck out, and

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one sense is used suddenly to the full, as though a deaf person were seeing, or a blind person heard. "The pianist was a woman. Her hands and arms, bare to the elbow, were more part of the piano than of herself. In the division of those two, she and her piano, her arms and hands would have gone with the ivory mechanical key-board." Objects are shown as a child sees them, broken off for a moment from their environment, and printed with a sudden piercing distinction. She knows the mind's illogical correspondence between unrelated things, and small impermanent effects of horror; as the emotion of a traveler, eager to get on with his journey, who leaves a hotel room repudiating it thoroughly, "not yielding it one last consideration as he throws the torn scraps of a letter on the floor," not understanding how he could have been glad to enter it. The humble glance of shame that can be love's proudest look; the ugly feeling that a self-conscious smile makes about the mouth; "the kind of kiss that showed just better spirits, not more love"; those feelings of clouded expectation, of the thing desired kept out of the thought by an act of the will, of the tortuous being self-deceived, the timid spirit that betrays what it most believes—these gain from Miss Meynell an explicitness and tragedy but seldom accorded them.

LOUISE BOGAN.

# Constitutional Orthodoxy

*Constitutional Limitations, by Thomas M. Cooley. Eighth Edition edited by Walter Carrington. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. Two vols. 1,562 pages. $20.*

THE unlucky publisher who rejected the manuscript of Cooley's "Constitutional Limitations" in 1867 might well lament his bad judgment, for its publication the next year by a rival house proved an almost epoch-making event in the development of American constitutional law. This book, which now appears in its eighth edition, has long been a classic in its field. Relied upon for sixty years by lawyers, lawmakers, and courts, it has exerted and continues to exert a profound and conservative influence upon the evolution of constitutional doctrines in this country.

It is not difficult to understand the foundations upon which this influence has been built. It met, first of all, an acute and growing need, for it dealt with the constitutional law which affects the states rather than the federal government. Previous writers had left this field unexplored; and Cooley's book came on the brink of the post-war economic and industrial revolution which was destined to drive the states into an experimental legislative activity, under their police powers, which gave sharp prominence to questions of constitutional limitations upon state authority. Secondly, the book was authoritative in the sense so palatable to lawyers and judges. Where there were available authorities, it contented itself with an accurate and impartial summary of what the law was. So judiciously was this done that when Judge Cooley ventured, as he sometimes did, into fields where the law was chaotic or authorities were lacking, his opinions were accorded by bench and bar an extraordinary respect. He became an authority not only upon what the law is, but also upon what it ought to be. This, of course, could hardly have been possible if the author had not been safely conservative. But Cooley, who had struggled to professional success through the hardships of pioneer life in Michigan during the thirties and forties, was thoroughly imbued with the pioneer philosophy. He had most profound respect for the traditional guarantees of constitutional liberty, a belief in the existence of certain natural rights, and a conviction that the multiplying extensions of state power must be subjected to strict judicial scrutiny. Finally, he was a lawyer writing for lawyers. For many years an active practitioner, a member of the Supreme Court of Michigan, his words enjoyed high prestige. Bench and bar alike could quote him and follow him without loss of professional self-respect.

While Cooley's influence extended in many directions, yet there were two fields of constitutional development in which it was peculiarly conspicuous and profound—the judicial review of legislation, and the evolution of the concept of due process of law. In his famous chapter on "The Circumstances Under Which a Legislative Act May be Declared Unconstitutional," he presented the classic and almost official description of how the orthodox judicial mind works, or says it works, in passing on the validity of a law. Here we learn of the profound reluctance with which courts approach constitutional questions, the great respect in which legislative views on such questions are held, the complete unwillingness of judges to void laws if any reasonable doubt as to their validity remains, the refusal of courts to invalidate statutes because they violate vague principles of natural justice or the "spirit of the Constitution," and the utter falsity of the suggestion that a judge who declares a statute void ever substitutes his own judgment for that of the legislature which enacted the law. The whole solemn fiction is spread out in detail, picturing the judge as the mere mouthpiece through which the hidden genius of the Constitution finds infallible expression. There can be no question that Cooley's plausible and quotable statement of these doctrines of judicial self-denial has helped to keep alive the hypnotic spell thrown over courts and laymen alike; a spell which has shrouded the vital process of judicial review of legislation in an atmosphere of mysticism and unreality, and prevented until quite recently any truly critical or realistic appreciation of its nature and problems. It has encouraged the persistence of the judicial attitude which made it possible for the Supreme Court in the Minimum Wage Case to invoke all the pious incantations about reasonable doubt and the non-substitution of judicial for legislative judgments, and then proceed ruthlessly to invalidate a statute by a five-to-three vote on the vague basis of due process of law and in the face of the recorded opinions of thirty-two state and federal judges that the act was valid.

Cooley's influence upon the growth of the concept of due process of law has been obscured by later and more conspicuous developments in that field. He was the first writer to collate the authorities, state and federal, on the interpretation of due process of law so that bench and bar could understand the variety of the problems involved and the general trend of the decisions. He was the first authority to indicate that due process of law should be a limitation on all branches of the government, and should serve as a test of the substance of legislation, instead of being merely a protection of the procedural rights of the individual. Particularly did he stress the protection to property under due process of law. He presented a comprehensive view of the state police power, and emphasized the necessity for confining its exercise within reasonable limits for the protection of private rights. The first edi-

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tion of "Constitutional Limitations" appeared in 1868, the year of the adoption of the Fourteenth Amendment, so that Cooley was not in a position to suggest the new due-process clause as a restriction on state police power; but his whole treatment of the problem leaned strongly in that direction, and when, after a few years of fumbling and indecision, the courts began to apply the due-process clause to state police legislation, they found much aid and comfort in his utterances. To judges trained in the Cooley doctrines, the sternest and widest application of the due-process test would certainly seem entirely orthodox.

The eighth edition of the book, which has now nearly doubled its original size, has added little to the text, but much to the footnotes, which occupy nearly half of the two volumes. The editorial work, though of uneven quality, has enhanced the value of the work. No revision, short of complete re-writing, could make of "Constitutional Limitations" a thoroughly modern treatise; but, like the proverbial hand of the dead, it will continue for a long time to exert a restraining and conservative influence upon the development of our constitutional law.

ROBERT E. CUSHMAN.

# Fancy Goods

*The Road to Heaven, by Thomas Beer. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.*

*Quiet Cities, by Joseph Hergesheimer. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.*

*Dead Lovers Are Faithful Lovers, by Frances Newman. New York: Boni and Liveright. $2.50.*

*Eva's Apples, by William Gerhardi. New York: Duffield. $2.50.*

SO many novels of today differ from each other only in the degree of their badness and dullness that it is in the nature of a windfall to discover four together which are successful, readable, and as different from each other as they could well be. In comparing them, they appear so different as to be completely original; but they are not, of course, so original as all that.

"The Road to Heaven" is the story of Lamon Coe, the black sheep of an Ohio farmer's family, who, after adventures which do not include a formal education, has fetched up at a New York cousin's. His cousin keeps a very superior sort of book-shop, and is in the forefront of the artistic world. The unspoiled Lamon makes a distinct hit with these sophisticates, picks a mistress, and enjoys her until she is burnt up in a not too accidental fire, whereupon he marries a girl from home, and goes back to the farm. Mr. Beer seems to be ridden by the fear of sentimentality and possessed with the desire for beauty. This is a common modern complaint. The consequence is that his words are sometimes gratuitously brutal and ugly. "Lamon opened his eyes and saw a skinny moon tossed up above the blue park on a yellow sky. People went grinding past the bench on the hard pathway through cooling air as he sat grinning at the moon." It is as if he had italicized these adjectives and participles for a comic effect. But his brusqueness sometimes pays, as in this flashlight of an arrest in a crowded street:

> . . . here was this man swinging on weak legs, his arms stretched out at both sides and his wrists held to the officers by bright links. He was a bird tipped with silver. He kept shrieking up, "Oh, Christ! Oh, Christ!" and his face was a horn's mouth screaming at the sky above this street.
>
> "Hey," Michael asked a boy near the car, "what the hell?"
>
> "Caught a fella on his wife."
>
> "Yeh? Shoot him?"
>
> "They're dead as hell."

Joseph Hergesheimer writes in a markedly original style; but this is not to say that he writes notably well. He has apparently never made any attempt to correct his more irritating idiosyncrasies—chief of which is a passion for qualifying phrases interjected quite arbitrarily among the members of a sentence; he carries this peculiar fault even into his dialogue. But his sentences are smooth even when they are clumsy; they sometimes waddle, but they never trip. And his general effect is therefore that kind of quiet sophistication which Mr. Struthers Burt strives so hard to attain. It may seem a queer manner in which to tell a tale of adventure, but Mr. Hergesheimer has shown us more than once how effective he can make it. In "Quiet Cities" he keeps, on the whole, to the standard of his production. A lengthy introduction explains the scheme of the book, which is to recreate a picture of the life in nine different American cities of the early nineteenth century: Boston, Albany, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Washington, Lexington, Charleston, Natchez and New Orleans.

"Dead Lovers Are Faithful Lovers" is the kind of book that must have been taken excessively seriously by its author. It is an unsmiling study of love—a large order for any writer, and especially so with the way the wind is setting nowadays. The story itself is, of necessity, an old one. A belle of Richmond marries a beau from Atlanta, settles down to become "an impregnable great lady," and watches his love (but not his manners) gradually begin to wander. In the heyday of his success as president of the Southeastern Railway, he falls in love with a girl librarian, but just at the crucial moment becomes ill and dies, and his wife gets the body. But the way Miss Newman tells her story is interesting: she combines the method of Greek tragedy with that of the "stream-of-consciousness" school. All the action, in other words, is "messengered"; we only overhear the whisper of events as they slip through the minds of the two heroines, in reminiscence or in almost subconscious comment. There is practically no dialogue; the writing is all third-person, and quite needlessly elaborated and involved. This kind of thing: "And for the first time, she was glad that she was not going up Peachtree Street alone with her husband, and that he could not prove he did not want to take one of her hands in both of his hands." Or this: "But when the clock's infallible short black hand pointed precisely to a nine and its infallible long black hand pointed precisely to a twelve, she was remembering that she had looked up into the thin brown face of the man she knew was" etc. Among the many things which a novel-reader resents doing while he is reading a novel, is to subtract double negatives and do mental-arithmetic clock problems. The cumulative effect of this story is considerable: it has moments of poignancy, and its tragedy is genuine, implicit, and restrained. If Miss Newman pursues this method further, however, her next book will have to be translated.

Mr. Beer's clean competence is praiseworthy, Mr. Hergesheimer's reminiscences are valid, Miss Newman's blind-alley method is interesting, but Mr. Gerhardi is the man for my money. He alone of these four is in the main current: he is up-to-date. Yet the book he has just written

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is in general a hodge-podge, a constant disappointment. But in his case, as with Hemingway, it's not exactly what he says, it's the nasty way he says it. Gerhardi is not nearly so nasty as Hemingway; in fact, he is often extremely funny. As in his earlier novel, "Futility," he depends on Russian characters, of a maddening naïveté and slyness, as the keys to this wild yarn. The hero, who tells the story, falls in with a family of Russian refugees on the Continent, makes love to the daughters, through one of them meets Baron Ottercove, the newspaper king of England, and is then caught into a frenzied whirl of increasingly crazy events, culminating in the destruction of the world by a fanatical scientist who has succeeded in disintegrating the atom. The scientist has the forethought, however, to inoculate a mountain in the Tyrol against the general nirvana, and there the survivors prepare to start their little world anew. "Eva's Apples" is overdone; it spreads out into farcical melodrama what might better have been confined to ironic burlesque; it goes on too long, and it is perhaps too heavily seasoned with barnyard love. If the author had not apparently had such a good time writing it, it might have been a really good book. The most interesting thing about it is its manner—a manner here hopelessly over-playful, too often kittenish, but satturated with irony—giving direct promise of what Hemingway, in his different way, promises: an authentic voice for a hitherto incoherent generation.

T. S. MATTHEWS.

# Philosophy and Rhetoric

*Possibility, by Scott Buchanan. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 198 pages. $3.50.*

*Dialectic, by Mortimer J. Adler. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 265 pages. $3.50.*

MODERN science has seriously troubled the minds of philosophers. In recent years, the trouble has developed the characteristics of a disorder. The account which is given by science of the world in which we live differs vastly from the account given by ordinary experience; and everything that science presents to us is made plausible by evidence, by careful systematic demonstration. Must we choose Science *or* Experience? Or can we somehow accept both?

On this momentous problem all sides have been taken. Mr. Buchanan hardly takes a definite side, but rather precariously sways on the fence. "Possibility" is an attack on the validity of science as a true account of the nature of reality; but all through the book are to be found statements which betray this attack and give science a validity having all the earmarks of truth.

Ideas, we are told, do not tell us about the actual; they tell us only about the possible. Our ideas fall into three large domains: literature, science and metaphysics (theology); possibility, therefore, is of three sorts: imaginative, scientific and absolute. Science differs from literature because the intellectual imagination has forsaken its freedom and assumed "responsibility"; and it differs from metaphysics (theology) because it has kept sufficient freedom to save it from absolute dogmatism.

If the realm of possibility is completely separate from, and independent of, the realm of actuality, it is extremely difficult to see how the intellectual imagination can assume "responsibility" of such a sort that literature (in the broad meaning of the term) will be transformed into science. If ideas are relevant only to the realm of possibility, then whatever responsibilities they may assume are still only "possible" responsibilities, not actual. A hero in a novel may assume "responsibility" for the heroine, but the assumption of ***such*** responsibility does not make a biography out of a novel. If actuality is not a condition of possibility, and experience is not a condition of ideas or knowledge, then "possibilities" must forever remain irresponsible; and the efficacy of science must forever remain a most mysterious and miraculous myth.

There is, however, a strong contradictory refrain in this book. "Validity means for us a faithful correspondence of system to actuality as presented in immediate experience." And, more comprehensively, "possibility is the measure of actuality." According to this, scientific possibility would have at least the *kind* of validity which scientists claim for their science; and not that kind of invalidity which the main argument maintains it has.

It is unduly to simplify the content of "Possibility" to say that any one argument is exclusively advanced—or that it harbors exclusively one contradiction. For Mr. Buchanan "possibility" is a concept which very remarkably holds in solution a number of philosophies. What particular philosophical precipitate one gets depends to a large extent upon the action of the reader's mind. Different readers will find in "Possibility" different philosophies. But all readers will find in it the same intellectual incisiveness and literary charm, and the same high qualities of an earnest mind grappling in a fundamental way with fundamental philosophical problems.

Just what, in a general way, we may expect to result from completely separating possibility from actuality is made very clear, indirectly rather than directly, in Mr. Adler's companion volume, "Dialectic," which is a verbose paraphrase of "Possibility." Mr. Adler's thesis is that dialectic—or philosophy—is concerned with arguing in a world where arguing has no purpose and is subjected to no discipline other than that involved in the laws of argument. Of these "laws," the most important are the ordinary laws of logic and the still more ordinary laws of "deportment" in dispute. Mr. Adler's discussion of the latter is of the sort to be found in any handbook on "How to Debate"; and his discussion of the former is to be found in any not too ancient handbook on logic.

Philosophy, according to Mr. Adler, is rhetoric or logomachy (impressively styled "dialectic"). With this view of philosophy many, who are not particularly fond of philosophy, will cheerfully agree. Indeed, it is impossible that philosophy should be anything but rhetoric, once you maintain that "facts" are irrelevant, that dialectic is concerned only with the form, not the content of argument. Rhetoricians, to be sure, hardly ever make the pretensions to logical rigor to be found in Mr. Adler's volume; but this is no fault of the rhetoricians.

If dialectic is concerned only with form, why must that form be logical? Why not the form of imagination as in literature? Literature is a good deal more pleasant (to some) than logic; and it can keep as far away from "facts." It is Mr. Adler's private concern that he prefers the formality of logic to the grace of literature. But, in making his preference the basis of his account of dialectic, he undermines his own contention: instead of "facts" having nothing to do with dialectic, the "fact" of his own preference has everything to do with it. In justice to Mr. Adler, though, it must be added that he allows very few other facts to influence him.

JOSEPH RATNER.

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# New York Wits

*Sunset Gun, by Dorothy Parker. New York: Boni and Liveright. 75 pages. $2.*

*Poems in Praise of Practically Nothing, by Samuel Hoffenstein. New York: Boni and Liveright. 217 pages. $2.*

A SOPHISTICATED palate, it is said, requires pungent fare. For the delight of epicures, New York has produced recently two disillusioned wits whose verse has an acrid and heady tang. Scoffers by profession, typically urban, Dorothy Parker and Samuel Hoffenstein share in common a gift of mockery which is as deadly as it is diverting. No major emotion is sacred to their venomous pens, and love, in particular, they view with a jaundiced eye. With neat, effective strokes they puncture the old illusions and then caper wickedly among the ruins. True, there are differences that separate them. Mr. Hoffenstein's gesture is a comic shrug of "fairly utter despair," while Dorothy Parker is inclined toward a gallant bravado. Both, however, appear to have taken for their motto the following lines from "Sunset Gun":

> Show your quick, alarming skill in
> Tidy mockeries of art;
> Never, never dip your quill in
> Ink that rushes from your heart.

Samuel Hoffenstein is especially indisposed to allow the sentimentalists any quarter. "Poems in Praise of Practically Nothing" crackle with hard-boiled humor and with deft, tricky rhymes. They are sour and satiric commentaries on all the phenomena of the jazz age—from radios and riveters to complexes and indigestion. They include, also, some demoniac parodies on Housman and Millay, which are, perhaps, the cream of the jest. Mr. Hoffenstein is funny at the expense of practically everything and ends, consequently, by not being so funny after all. He has ridden his formula to death, and one quickly wearies of it. The wisecracks and the ironic twist at the end of each poem arrive with such unfailing regularity that they cease to evoke a chuckle of surprise. One begins to feel that the poet's humor is not so sophisticated as it sounds—that it is tinctured, indeed, with the cheap cynicism of the adolescent.

It is this pitfall of monotony which Dorothy Parker escapes, although "Sunset Gun" is hardly so brave a salute as "Enough Rope." Again, as in her earlier book, Mrs. Parker thumbs her nose at faithless lovers and douses one with cold water at the end of a deceptively gentle lyric. Unlike Mr. Hoffenstein, however, she is able to reconcile flippancy with the exquisite and haunting phrase. The poems entitled "A Pig's-Eye View of Literature" are a match for his parodies—her jeers at love are more impudent and pointed. But Dorothy Parker is willing, at times, to pluck a string of genuine emotion, and in so doing she proves her superior caliber. Her fragile sonnets, her crisp and delicate ballads, have a quality of loveliness which is not evanescent. The gay defiance of "A Whistling Girl" and the tenderness of "The Maid Servant at the Inn," alike, belong to the best tradition of lyric verse. Although a sly and jaunty irony is her especial gift—one would not wish it otherwise—it is pleasant to know that Dorothy Parker can occasionally forget to be a New York wit. Mr. Hoffenstein could profit by her example.

EDITH H. WALTON.

# Aubrey Beardsley

*Aubrey Beardsley, by Haldane Macfall. Simon and Schuster. New York: 270 pages. $6.*

NOW the life of Aubrey Beardsley offers not inconsiderable opportunities to authors in the several departments of biography. For the story-teller, there are the romantic incidents of his existence: the tale of his rise—in the period which most young men allow to adolescence and an early love affair—from poverty and clerkship to wealth, fame, a fashionable place in life and a romantic death. To the student of affairs, Beardsley might become the point of vantage from which to observe a group of men who, though they were among the most skillful and earnest yet produced by English art, yet were self-marked with triviality and externality through their willing detachment from their own times.

And the student of art might find in Aubrey Beardsley a true master of line and one possessed of the marvelous ability of making a flow of black Indian ink take on the very texture of flesh, wood and earth; who at the same time was completely typical of the "elegant" convention of his time.

Mr. Macfall, however, has rejected all of these, as well as any plan whatsoever, in favor of gossip. Nor is the gossip informative, pointed, or amusing: it is vague and pompous, set down in an ungraceful style and with no reasonable sequence. The connection between Beardsley and William Morris, Beardsley and Wilde—Beardsley and almost anyone—is boiled down into pointless anecdote. A quarrel between Beardsley and the author, on the other hand, is presented at much length, but with its basic details left out, as if the whole world must be familiar with them. And at the end Macfall humorously recounts his worsting of the artist at a battle of wits which rose to its brilliant climax when he informed Beardsley that the morning bath "will soon lose its startling thrill of novelty if he persist in it." As a result of this, we are led to believe, young Beardsley ceased to associate with "jackals" and attached himself to the court of Haldane Macfall.

"Aubrey Beardsley" is so carelessly written and shoddily edited that at times it becomes sheer chaos. There is one long paragraph, running in space to two pages and in matter to about four unrelated subjects, which flames suddenly into an attack on Beardsley's publishers, who are accused of underpaying the artists. "Did he get a living wage?" demands Macfall: and he continues thus, in the style of a street-corner agitator.

To which the subdued conclusion is: "His bank book alone will reveal to us what he earned. But suppose he did not get a living wage."

Let us, indeed, suppose.

There are, as promised by the publishers, fifty-three illustrations. They were selected, perhaps, because they were easily at hand. There is not one of them that is not of the utmost familiarity. One quite ordinary drawing called "The Mirror of Love" is hailed as Beardsley's greatest work. The powerful unnamed drawing, used to illustrate the fourth chapter of "Under the Hill" as published in the Savoy, is not reproduced or even mentioned.

Messrs. Simon and Schuster have issued the book in a *de luxe* format. It is indifferently printed on a thick sort of paper which is so soft that it is incapable of even approximating the fine, sharp lines of Beardsley's drawing; and those characteristic pieces in which white line is picked out against a black background are frequently mere hazy

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blurs. The binding is good black buckram, and the dust cover in good taste and well printed. The whole is enclosed in a glassine paper wrapper in the manner of a patented breakfast food.

MELVIN P. LEVY.

# Pictures of History

*The Gateway to American History, by Randolph G. Adams. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 176 pages. $3.*

NO history for American children is complete without Columbus and his egg trick, Captain John Smith's romantic afterthought of Pocahontas, and the excitable servant of Sir Walter Raleigh, who mistook his master's pipe for a house a-fire.

Mr. Adams is a librarian, a historian and a bibliographer. This presupposes access to all the possible sources of real information. Yet he has included these, with the historian's undying hope that his young reader will consent to swallow a little learning if he sweetens it with these blameless legends. The reading matter is merely a modest pretext for reprinting a fascinating collection of old engravings and maps that otherwise might have remained buried in great libraries, and for this reason it needs no criticism. It furnishes a pleasant contrast to the pictures, for it is a schoolmasterly account of man's search for spice and indigo, lands and gold. Carefully disinfected of religion and politics, it presents a thoroughly wholesome story of the workings of the economic urge that drove men across wild seas and into strange countries, to rapine and slaughter. Naturally, the children need not to be told everything, and it is important to convince them from the beginning of the essential rightness of our side, which was the winning one. A sweeter version of how England conquered the seas and grabbed this continent from the rapacious French and Dutch has yet to be written.

The pictures are violently opposed to the story. They tell of tremendous labor and disaster and the terrors of the sea. They make simple and honest comment on the great things that were being done in a hardy and realistic world, as if the eyes of men, at least, were innocent, and recorded what they saw without feeling the need to justify or explain it. Children will be immensely entertained by these pictures of spice caravans from Asia, the shipwrecks and sea monsters, the Indians and the armored soldiers, all done in good sound black and white with primitive perspective.

K. A. P.

## Contributors

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